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COMPUTER Gaming World

August 1988 Number 50



50th Issue

"It wins my vote for *Adventure Game of the Year.*"
-William "Biff" Kritzen, *Computer Gaming World*

HOT. MEAN. RADIO-ACTIVE.



AUGUST 20, 2087

Nothing could be worse than this god-forsaken, radioactive desert.

More Sniperdroids! All tracking me with them death glares. And them Uzis. They're weird trigger-twitchin' folks. I suspect it's them poisoning the water.

Or maybe it's those Leather Thugs. Heck, I don't know anymore. I heard they have a bunch of civilians cut off east of Ranger Center, which is where I'm headed. Hope not. They want me dead. Like every other mutant this side of Vegas.



The worst part is, I'm getting to be as bad as they are. You wouldn't believe some of the ways I've learned to kill. I hang out in sewers, and my best friend is a MAC 17 submachine gun.

Gramps talked about life before the nuclear war. All I know is I don't want others living this way. Gotta rebuild this desert right. Gotta make it so you can sleep with your eyes closed.

WASTELAND.™ A new role-playing game from the creators of the Bard's Tale™ series.

3 WAYS TO ORDER: 1) Visit your retailer. 2) Call 800-245-4525 from U.S. or Canada, 8am to 5pm PST to order by VISA/MC. 3) Mail check (U.S.$) or VISA/MC #, cardholder name, and exp. date to Electronic Arts Direct Sales, P. O. Box 7530, San Mateo, CA 94403. Apple II version $49.95, Commodore version $39.95, plus $3 shipping/handling. CA residents add 6.5% sales tax. Allow 1–3 weeks for U.S. delivery.

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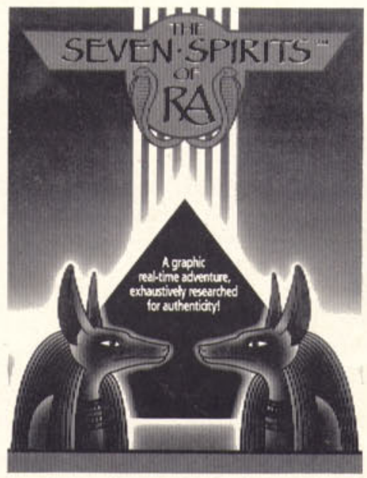
COMPUTER Gaming World

August 1988
Number 50

Covering the World of Computer Games For Seven Years

FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS

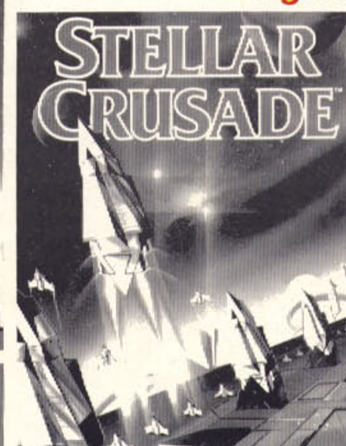


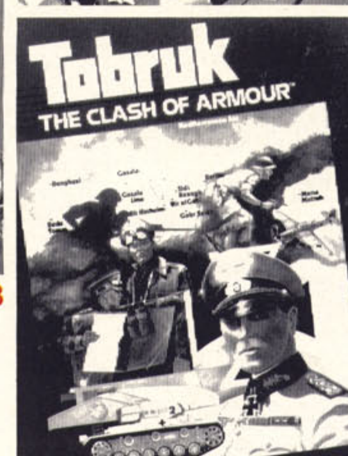
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« Circle Reader Service #26

TAKING A PEEK

Accolade
550 S. Winchester Blvd. #200
San Jose, CA 95128

BUBBLE GHOST: "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles" would be a great theme song for the protagonist in this unique maze/chase game. Since the main character is a ghost, players do not have to worry about having their characters "die" in this action game, but they do have to attempt to keep that fragile bubble from popping as they travel through 36 levels of fans which cause turbulent air; monsters who dislike ghostly frolicking; and burning candles which threaten to turn the lights out on that poor bubble. Atari ST ($34.95). Circle Reader Service Card #1.

Arcadia
711 W. 17th St. Unit G9
Costa Mesa, CA 92627

AWESOME ARCADE ACTION PACK: This package contains three different action titles. "Sidewinder" (pictured below) is a "Zaxxon"-type space game which competed head-on in the arcades with the more familiar title. "Xenon" is another outer space shoot-'em-up which offers a familiar feel and challenge to arcade fans. "Blastaball" is an outer space "polo" or "hockey" game with a unique twist. In "Blastaball," players pilot their ships across a zero-G playing field and attempt to move the puck by means of missile fire. Amiga ($49.95). Circle Reader Service Card #2.

California Dreams
c/o Logical Design Works
780 Montague Expwy, #403
San Jose, CA 95131

TRIANGO: Imagine an ancient and popular game reborn on the computer and you can visualize TrianGO. That's right! The most recent release from California Dreams is a modern variation of the venerated oriental strategy game of "Go." Further, it offers a computer opponent and "edit" function to enhance one's enjoyment. IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #3.

CAPCOM U.S.A., Inc.
1283-C Mountain View/Alviso Rd.
Sunnyvale, CA 94089

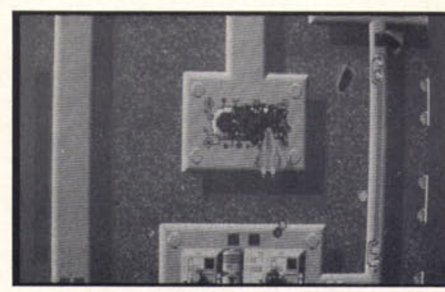
STOCKER: For those who enjoy movies like "Cannonball Run" and want their opportunity to outwit and outrun "Smokey" from coast to coast, this action

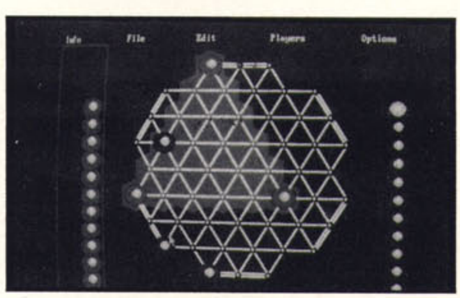
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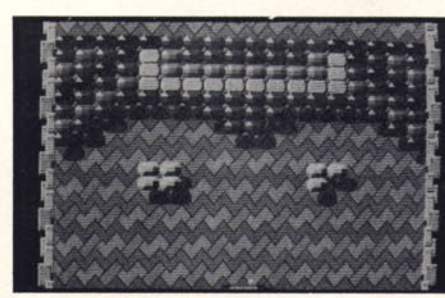
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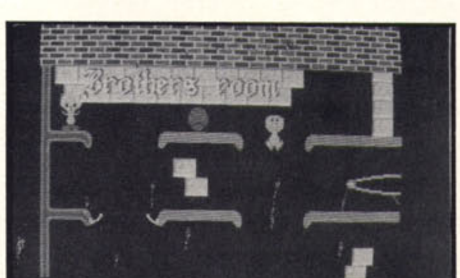


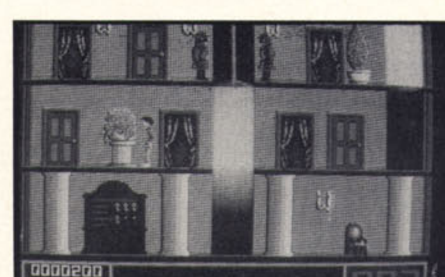
Bubble Ghost


Awesome Arcade Action Pack


Triango


Crystal Hammer


Larrie & the Robbery of the Ardies


Mission Elevator

Don't buy this game... if Rhett and Scarlet are your idea of

The Civil War

From the epic campaigns of the East to the ceaseless skirmishing in Missouri—and throughout the vast lands in between—the American Civil War was a conflict memorable above all for its staggering scope and legendary leaders. A dynamic portrait of this immense struggle, from its infancy to its final gasp, **The Civil War** depicts the nation and its leaders as no game has done before.

If this sounds like your idea of The Civil War, pick up the game at your local dealer or call the toll free number below.

The Civil War is for the IBM® PC and compatibles. Color graphics card is required. $35.00

A one or two player game.

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Civil War is a trademark of Victory Games, Inc. and licensed to The Avalon Hill Game Company.

This strategy game puts YOU in command of the armies of the North and South. Each player must determine in advance where his major campaigns will take place—in the East, West or Trans-Mississippi Theater. From there, armies must be formed and leaders assigned. Once movement orders are issued, it is up to the individual commanders to gain the initiative, move their forces and engage the enemy.

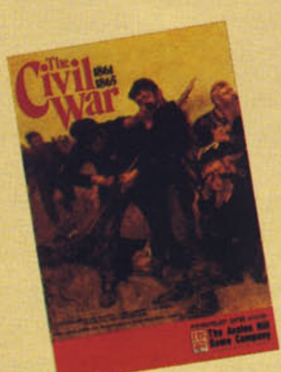
The Civil War is a detailed simulation of the situation faced by Jefferson Davis and Abraham Lincoln. Although blessed with a larger population and industrial capacity, the North suffered from a lack of quality leaders. The South on the other hand had excellent leaders, but was forced to field smaller armies. To recreate the difficulty field commanders had in finding the enemy and bringing him to battle, players enter their orders secretly. The game becomes a see-saw battle with the North attempting to capture cities by invasion and amphibious landings, with the South striking back with quick sorties.

The Civil War comes with a number of special features.

- ★Full-color 16″×22″ reference map.
- ★Hexes are color-coded to indicate ownership.
- ★The game also records the results of battles and saves them in a special file you can print out and review later.
- ★Four year-long scenarios; each may be played out to the end of the war.
- ★Ironclads, sea transport, amphibious landings, Union blockade and Confederate commerce raiders.
- ★Over sixty leaders available, rated for tactical and strategic ability.







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The Greatest Story Ever Told

(Well, maybe not the greatest; but it isn't bad)

by Russell Sipe

I have not always been the publisher and editor of *Computer Gaming World*. I used to be a Southern Baptist minister. In 1979, I made the hardest decision of my life and left the ministry. The reasons were many, not the least of which was my dissatisfaction with my former denomination's accelerating "evolution" into a narrow fundamentalism.

However, *now*, I find great joy and personal satisfaction in my role as the publisher and editor of *Computer Gaming World*.

For nearly eight years *Computer Gaming World* has been a consistent and respected voice in the dynamic, exciting, and volatile world of computer entertainment. With the publication of our Golden Fiftieth Issue, I would like to share with you the history of the birth and growth of *CGW*.

In the spring of 1981 (two years after leaving the ministry) I was driving down the Orange Freeway near Anaheim Stadium, thinking about some problems that I had encountered while playing SSI's *Computer Air Combat* game.

I will never forget what happened next. It is as clear in my mind now as it was then. While passing Anaheim Stadium on the left I thought to myself, "I sure would like to read up on this game." However, it occurred to me that no one was writing about computer games in any detailed fashion. "Someone should start a magazine on computer games" I thought to myself.

Then a little voice spoke to me, "Why don't *you* do it?". No, I thought to myself, I have no experience in publishing. "So what? You can learn!" replied the voice. Then, something I read somewhere came to mind: the secret of a successful business is to find a need and fill it. If I personally felt the need for a computer game magazine, surely there were others that felt it as well. By the time I reached home, I was getting excited. I felt I was on to something, but I knew that I needed to gather a lot of information.

For the next two weeks, I talked with a lot of people in the computer game industry as well as small magazine publishers in the board game field. During those two weeks, I put together a plan of action to start a computer game magazine. I knew that I didn't have the money to start a business so I formed Golden Empire Publications Inc. in June of 1981 and took on a small group of investors drawn from family and friends.

Now we needed a name for the magazine. More than twenty titles were considered. These included such candidates as The Computer Gamer, The Floppy Gamer; Software Gamer (these three sounded too much like a sci-fi magazine entitled *The Space Gamer* which was published by Steve Jackson Games from Texas), Computer Games (simple yet elegant and powerful); Computer Gaming (see immediately preceding comment); Wumpus; Game Bits; Computer Game Review; Game Software Review (now used by one of our advertisers); Software Wars; Run Games; and Kilobaud Warrior. *Computer Gaming World* was decided upon because it suggested that we would do more than just review computer games. We were interested in the whole world of computer games. We were interested in the strategies, in the design aspects of the games, in the people behind the games, and in the companies that produced the games. *Computer Gaming World* was conceived of as more than a consumer oriented game review magazine. We have always tried (we think with success) to be something of a trade magazine, as well. The positive feedback we get from designers, publishers, and game distributors are testimony to the fact that we have done just that.

With a name and $6000 in the bank we began to put together the first issue of *CGW* which was slated for a November 1981 release. By August we found out that we would be having competition. *Electronic Games* (later renamed *Computer Entertainment*) from Reese Communications out of New York and *Softline* (later renamed *St. Game*) out of North Hollywood were also scheduled for Winter 1981 debuts. "Great!" I thought to myself "I've not even printed an issue yet, and I have big time competition!"

All three magazines debuted within days of each other and the computer game magazine industry was born.

As it turns out Al and Margot Comstock Tommervik (of *Softalk* and *Softline*) became my good friends and were a source of help to me

on more than one occasion. The relationship between the two companies was always warm.

Although I did not know *Electronic Games* editor Arnie Katz back then, Arnie and I have since become good friends and he is now a regular contributor to *CGW* (along with his partners Bill Kunkel and Joyce Worley).

By 1983, the arcade game fad was in high swing and *CGW* had something on the order of 18 competing titles on the newsstand. The years 1983-1984 were trying times for us. We had to compete with higher circulation magazines for advertising dollars and newsstand space. Nevertheless, our conservative business approach helped us weather the storm. Then came the arcade game crash of 1984. It took down the majority of the computer game magazines with it. By the winter of 1984, only a few computer game magazines remained. By summer 1985 *CGW* was the only 4-color computer game magazine left.

The manufacturers who survived the crash and prospered were those companies that, for the most part, targeted an older age group (especially those consumers who were interested in strategy and adventure games as opposed to arcade action games). Fortunately for *CGW*, our readership has always been dominated by the adult strategy/adventure gamer; an audience that was not only interested in the games themselves, but also in the personalities that designed the games and the companies that manufactured them. *CGW* caters to this readership.

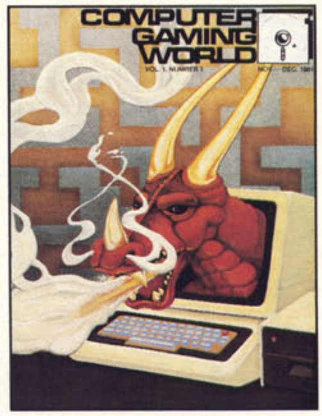
Currently a monthly, *CGW* began life as a bimonthly. Reader demand caused us to go to a nine issue per year schedule with the Jan/Feb 1986 issue. This schedule was maintained until fairly recently.

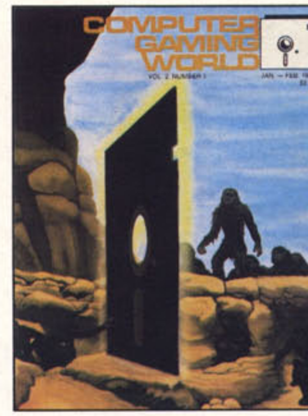
In Fall 1987 we started a second magazine called *Computer Game Forum*. It was intended to be a quarterly that was more gossip/news/humor oriented than *CGW*. Unfortunately, *CGF* did not attract the advertising interest of the manufacturers since it was perceived as being too similar to CGW to justify the additional advertising expense. It was discontinued after two issues. However, some of the style, humor, and content of *CGF* was carried over into *CGW*. Additionally, with the demise of CGF, CGW was transformed into a monthly publication.

Now it is 1988 and the computer gaming world is undergoing a resurgence. Sales are up, numbers of releases are on the climb again, and, best of all, the front line products are getting better and better. I can't think of a more positive atmosphere in which to celebrate America's first, oldest, and best computer game magazine, *Computer Gaming World*!.

Psalm 9:1-2

Russell Sipe



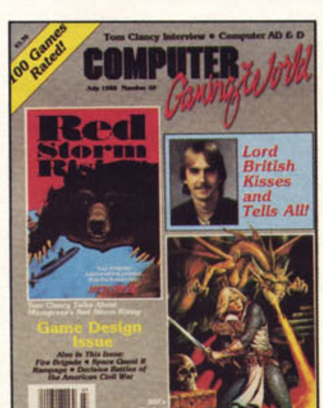


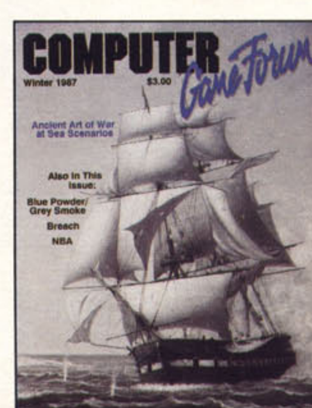












Questron II

Censoring the "Evil Book of Magic"

Reviewed by Scorpia

Q*uestron II* is the follow-up to the original Questron. In the previous game, you defeated the evil wizard Mantor and hence, were left with his evil book of magic which had to be destroyed. Destroying the book forms the basis of the plot for the current adventure.



The finished book is invulnerable to all damage, so the only way to eliminate the foul tome is to wreck it before it's completed. Thus, the good wizard Mesron sends you back into the past, at about the time the book is nearing completion, and you must make your way to Mantor's secret lair to destroy it.

However, going back in time has its disadvantages: you become weaker and lose all the good stuff you accumulated on your first adventure. In fact, Questron II is a stand alone game in which you must create a new character instead of bringing over the one you had in *Questron*. So if you can't find your old Questron disk, don't worry, you won't need it.

TITLE:	Questron II
SYSTEMS:	Apple, Atari ST C-64/128, & IBM (Amiga and IIGS soon)
# PLAYERS:	Solitaire
PRICE:	$39.95-$49.95
DESIGNERS:	Charles Dougherty John Dougherty, Cyrus Harris, & G. MacDonald
PUBLISHER:	Strategic Simulations Mountain View, CA

As in the first game, your character comes with pre-assigned values for all attributes, so character "creation" is simply a matter of giving the character a name, after which you're ready to begin play.

Those who have done Questron (or even *Legacy of the Ancients*) will find many similarities in this game. Specific monsters inhabit specific terrain types (grasslands, forests, mountains, swamps, oceans, tombs, and dungeons), and will not be found elsewhere. Wandering creatures (who can show up anywhere except underground) may offer you items, hit points, or information in exchange for money. Better weapons and armor become available in towns only over time, and slowly at that. Most importantly, getting a good foothold in the game is just as hard as it was before.

You begin with very little: only cheap armor, a dagger, some money, food, the evil book of magic (which contains the destruction spell), and a gold key. Monsters start showing up pretty quickly and since some of them can be quite nasty, it's important to find a town with a healing shop as soon as possible. Otherwise, you are stuck paying outrageous prices to wandering creatures for hit points (if you can afford it). Saving the game frequently so progress won't be lost is a wise move.

Outdoor combat is pretty much the same as before. Monsters seem to pop up out of nowhere right next to you (once in awhile you know something is coming, but not too often), and fighting begins. You can use hand weapons, or spells if you have some. The "Sonic Whine" spell is particularly good against tough opponents (such as venom ants), and "Time Sap" can freeze them if you'd prefer to run away instead of fight.

You can also end up fighting the wandering creatures if you're not careful. When they appear with an offer, they expect you to accept or reject it. If you do anything else, they suddenly turn aggressive and attack. This can also happen if you're travelling quickly along the countryside and try to move away from them when they show up (which can happen at any time). Fighting wandering creatures is not recommended, as they don't carry much cash, and they can be difficult opponents. Accepting their offers of weapons and armor isn't recommended either, as they never have bargains. Everything always costs more than you would pay in town.

Your first task is a matter of wandering around the island, noting where the various towns and cathedrals are, and locating the castle. Inside the castle is a room where you can talk to Mesron, who will, from time to time, raise you in level (as well as send you on little errands). Level raises will also increase some of your attributes. Unlike the other games, however, there are no training areas where attributes can be increased through arcade skill games.

The towns have a variety of shops, but not all towns have all shops, so it's important to make a list of who has what (especially in regard to armor, weapons, and spells, and the prices being charged for these items). Money will not be easy to come by at first, so you want to get the most for your cash. Healing shops, for some reason, are not labelled. You will have to look for an occupied table with no sign, which is the usual indication of a healer.

Information can be obtained from only two sources: from certain establishments in the towns, and

from wandering creatures outdoors. Inns, barbers, and mystics will, for a small fee, give you a hint or clue, one per town visit (note that inns only function as information centers; you can't really spend the night in one of them to heal up). The people who dance around inside the towns have nothing valuable to tell you, and, in fact, have only a limited number of stock phrases to say when you talk to them.

The first island has only one dungeon, a tomb below Riverside Cathedral. You must go through it to obtain certain items. One of them is an object that Mesron wants you to get. Another will let you in to see the "Holy Ones", and there are others which, when retrieved, will allow you to purchase "breads of life" from the Holy Ones. These breads of life are very important later on in the game, so stock up on as many as you can. Of course, there will also be chests of gold you can open and loot.

Since the view in the tombs is an overhead perspective, monsters can be seen approaching and occasionally, it is possible to outrun them, especially if you are on your way out. However, most of the time you have no option but to fight. Spells will be more helpful then hand-to-hand combat, so make certain you have plenty before going in. "Sonic Whine" does not work in the tombs, but all other spells will.

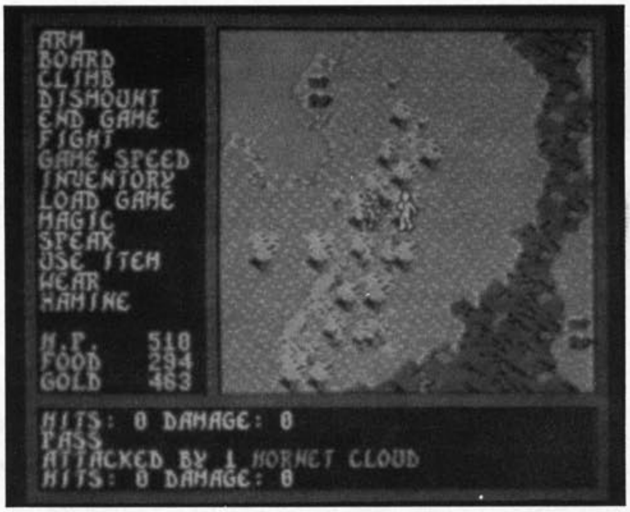
As in both Questron and Legacy, you will have to do some looting of the castle chests (both on this island and the next) in order to obtain keys (and possibly some money!). The guards, as usual, will be tough and hit hard, so it's necessary to plan looting expeditions in advance, and to come prepared with a lot of spells.

Chests that are opened stay opened after you exit the castle, so they do not provide an unlimited supply of money. However, leaving the castle does "turn off" the guards, and they will not chase you when you come again (unless, that is, you start opening chests again . . . grin). Naturally, any guards you may have killed the last time will be replaced the next time you enter.

Eventually, you will be ready to visit the second (and last) island. For this, you must purchase a ship, which is best done in Octapoint, and sail north until you reach your destination. The second island is much like the first, except that the monsters here are more deadly. While many of them seem the same, they will do more damage to you, and will be harder to kill. In addition, there are some new critters roaming the outdoors, and they are very nasty indeed. Your best bet here is to find the one town that sells trained eagles and use that for your transportation. This will enable you to avoid the majority of encounters.

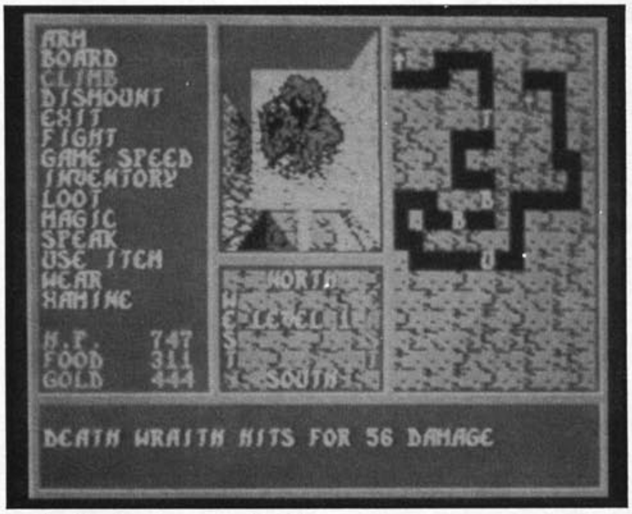
This second island has one tomb and two dungeons. Fortunately, the "Twilight Tomb" is somewhat easier to get through than the other one. There is a Hall of Maps in Mesron's castle on the first island and paying a hefty fee will let you look at the map of the twilight tomb. You can make a copy of this with some tracing paper (held against the monitor), and thus speed your trek through this unwholesome place.

The dungeons are even easier than the tombs. In the first dungeon, you can get a magic scroll that does auto-mapping of each level as you go through the dungeons (the scroll works only in dungeons, not tombs). Since the dungeon levels are fairly simple to begin with, the auto-map feature (once you have it) makes exploring pretty much a breeze, especially as the maps for each level are retained when you go up or down. Thus, remapping is not necessary unless you leave the dungeon and come back to it later.



The dungeons have a 3-D view, and here, too, you can usually see monsters approaching (unless they attack from behind or the sides). Running is rather difficult, however, so you are pretty much forced to fight it out. Spells tend to be more helpful than hand-to-hand combat. Some monsters can damage weapons and armor, so bring a couple of spares with you, just in case.

Scattered throughout the dungeons are various chests, urns, and coffins. Chests generally hold gold or weapons. Urns can increase your hitpoints, although some are trapped and will cause damage. The same is true of coffins.



Some passageways are trapped, so it's necessary to examine all corridors before walking through them. Once exposed, a trap is harmless and you can pass it safely. Traps stay exposed for as long as you are in the dungeon. Moving between levels will not reset the traps.

In the first dungeon, you are looking for the key to open the door of the second dungeon (which, by the way, you can't enter even with the key unless you have reached the level of Knight). As you might expect, it will be somewhere on the eighth (and final) level.

The last dungeon leads, naturally, to Mantor's

(Continued on page 50)

TAKING A PEEK

(Continued from page 4)

game could be the answer. It takes 37 screens to get from Florida to California in this game where drivers score points for fast times, avoidance of tickets, and not running out of gas. (Not pictured).C-64/128 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service Card #4.

Constellation Software
17 Saint Mary's Court
Brookline, MA 02146

CRYSTAL HAMMER: This European import is an attractive "Arkanoids"-type game offering 30 different screens. The play is similar to the earlier game, but adds "intelligent" enemies and "unhealthy" crystals. Amiga ($19.95). Circle Reader Service Card #5.

LARRIE AND THE ROBBERY OF THE ARDIES: This is a running, jumping, chase game where the player takes on a "Tweedie Bird" type personna (a seemingly helpless little bird that cannot fly, but is pursued by persistent baddies). Six different combat enhancements add variety to the game. One or two players. Amiga ($19.95). Circle Reader Service Card #6.

MISSION ELEVATOR: An espionage chase game, this product incorporates ideas from several earlier action hits. Players must fight their way through 62 levels of a grand European hotel in order to foil the destructive plans of foreign agents. Each level has a secret object to be located before the counter-espionage agent can move to the next level. Amiga ($19.95). Circle Reader Service Card #7.

Data East U.S.A., Inc.
470 Needles Drive
San Jose, CA 95112

KARNOV: Jinborov Karnovski is the fire-breathing Russian portrayed in this conversion of the popular coin-op game. The djinn-like hero (actually, a former circus star) must locate and retrieve the Treasure of Babylon from the evil dragon (Ryu) who stole it from Karnov's village. Ten different combat enhancements (including bombs, boots, and boomerangs) are as indispensable to our hero as Batman's utility belt is to him. Players must defeat the Boss Enemy (Ryu's strongest monster) on each level before moving to the next. C-64/128 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service Card #8.

Discovery Software International
163 Conduit Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

ZOOM: Think of "Pac-Man" in hyperspace and you have an idea of this clever game. Each level offers a grid that represents a plane or dimension in space. The player must trace every line

(Continued on page 49)

CONVERSIONS RECEIVED

For the Amiga:
The Bard's Tale II: The Destiny Knight (EA)
Empire (Interstel)
World Tour Golf (EA)

For the Apple II:
Soko-Ban (128K) (Spectrum Holobyte)
Test Drive (128K) (Accolade)

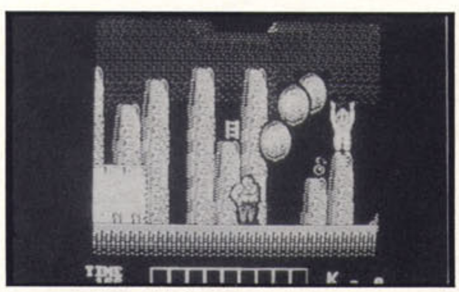
For the Atari 8-bit:
Bismarck: The North Sea Chase (Datasoft)

For the Atari ST:
Questron II (SSI)
Speed Buggy (Data East)

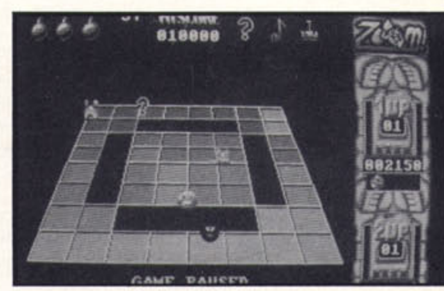
For the Commodore 64/128:
The Bard's Tale III: Thief of Fate (EA)
Master Ninja (Paragon)
Wasteland (EA)

For the IBM:
Paperboy (Mindscape)
PHM Pegasus (EA)
Shadowgate (Mindscape)
Uninvited (Mindscape)
Wizardry IV: Return of Werdna (Sir Tech)

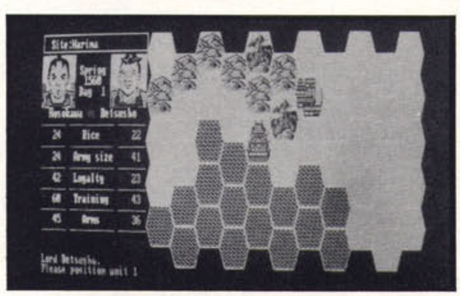
For the Macintosh:
Moebius (Origin)
Solitaire Royale (Mac II) (Spectrum Holobyte)
Tetris (Spectrum Holobyte)



Karnov



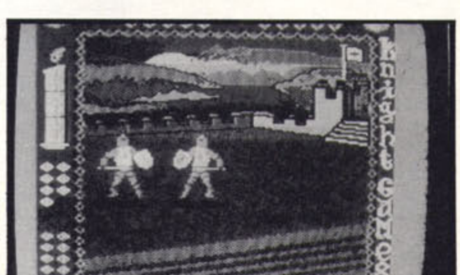
Zoom



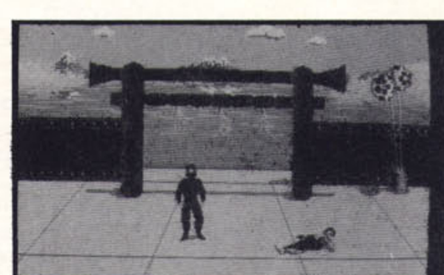
Nobunaga's Ambition



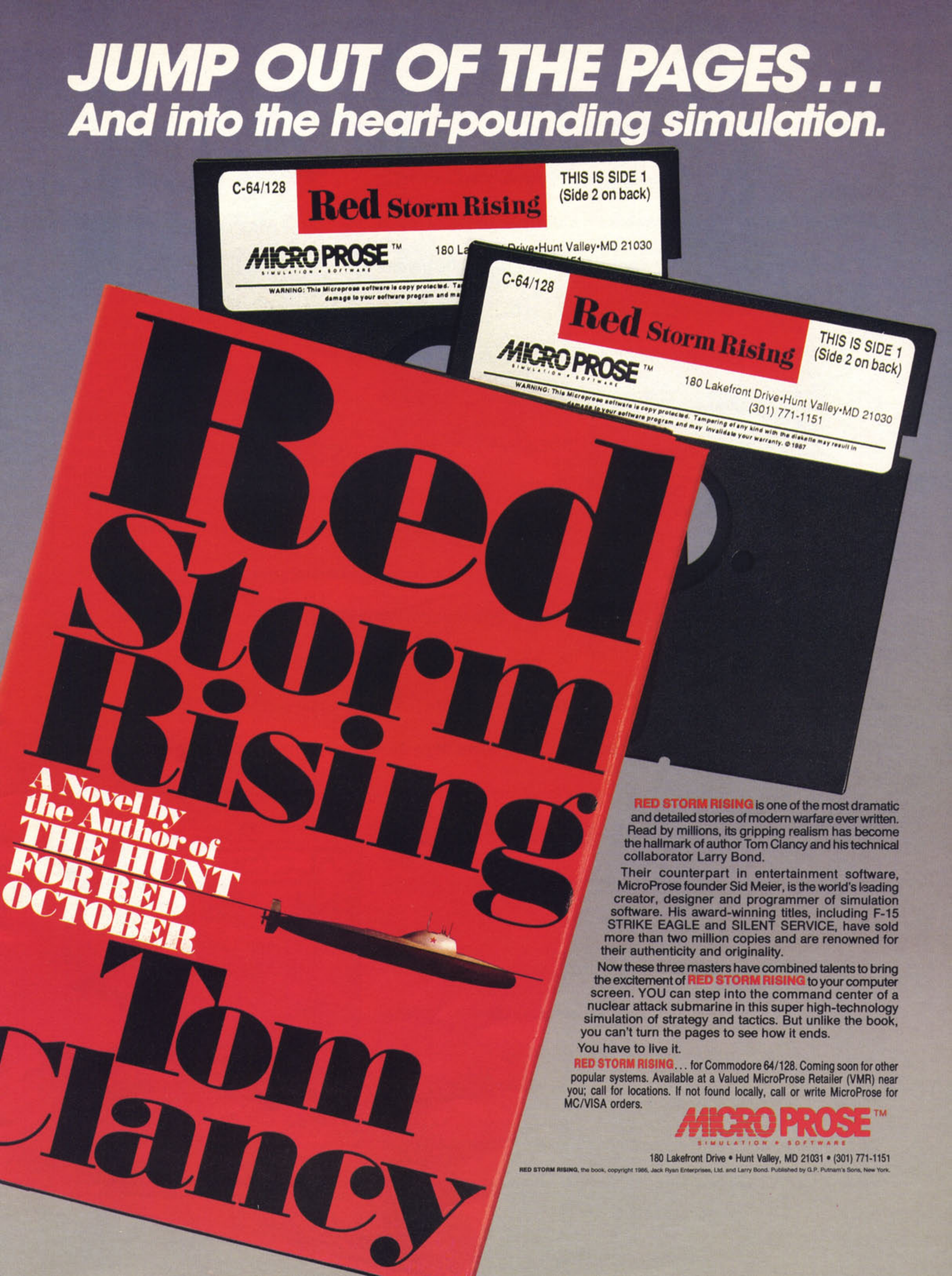
Demon's Forge



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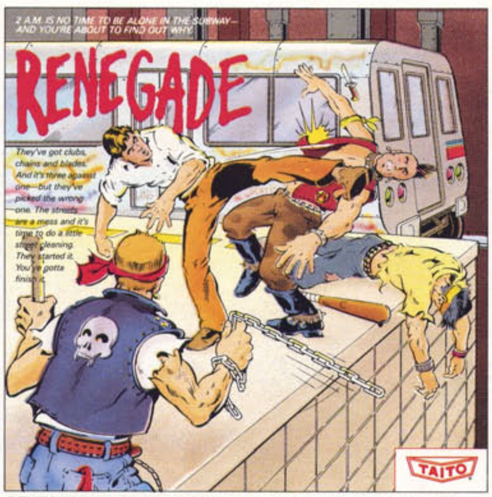
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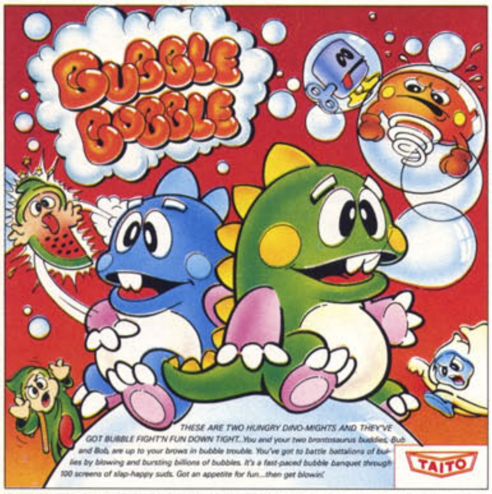
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Into The Hornet's Nest

by Daniel Hockman

You put on the soundtrack from TOP GUN. You settle back in your chair and close your eyes. The driving bass notes that open "Danger Zone" hit your ears and body. Suddenly you are transported into the cockpit of an F-18. You jam the throttles forward to the stops. The engines wind up into a tremendous roar and your craft strains against its restraints. You ask your RIO if he is ready. From the rear seat he quips "Let's boogie!" You kick in the afterburner and signal thumbs up to catapult officer. He salutes and brings his yellow wand down to the deck, and elevates it to point down the runway. Your machine quivers at full power, the adrenaline flows, your heart pounds . . . any second now . . . **Wham!** *The catapult fires. You are thrust back into your seat as you rush down the ramp. In two and a half seconds you and 16 tons of screaming machine and deadly explosives dip off the end of the carrier and struggle to rise above the angry sea. Forty feet, sixty, ninety, a hundred . . . you stared into the face of disaster once more and have survived. You are on your way. Its time to rock . . . and . . . roll!!!!*



TITLE:	F/A-18 Interceptor
SYSTEM:	Amiga
# PLAYERS:	Solitaire
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNER:	Robert Dinnerman
PUBLISHER:	Electronic Arts San Mateo, CA

We often experience life vicariously through our computer games. Never is this more true than with jet fighter simulators. After seeing *Top Gun* and reading books such as Stephen Coonts' excellent *Flight of the Intruder* we yearn for these experiences. Experiences that, if unavailable in reality, we *can* have thanks to such programs as EA's new **F-18 Interceptor**, SubLogic's **JET**, and Spectrum Holobyte's award winning **Falcon**. Since **Falcon** was reviewed in the February 88 issue of CGW (#44), we will not spend much time on it here.

SubLogic's *JET* was introduced for the IBM in June 1985. The Apple and C-64 versions came out shortly thereafter. However, it was the 68000 microprocessor versions of *JET* that really knocked our socks off. The graphics and sounds drew us in. We were in the cockpit, our heart pounded faster as we closed with the MIGs. We learned how difficult carrier landings could be.

Now comes *F-18 Interceptor*. Graphics that surpass 68000 *JET* (and that is difficult to do). And the sound! Wow! Talk about realistic feel. Here it is!

As the pilot of an F/A-18 jet fighter you work your way through a series of six combat missions in the San Francisco Bay Area. A training mission precedes the combat missions and, if you wish, you can simply fly around and explore the Bay Area in a MIG-free sky.

The combat missions are in an increasing order of difficulty. After completing the final mission, you can start the cycle again, only this time the MIGs are meaner.

The sound is fantastic. You will hear the scream of the jet engine; the explosion of missiles, the barrage of cannon fire; all sounding *very* realistic.

Although there are no realistic air-to-ground missions and thus no air-to-ground weapons, you *can* fire your Sidewinders and Sparrow missiles at ground targets. Missile strikes on the ground appear as craters and columns of smoke (but you must be in the immediate vicinity to see these effects).



Missile strikes against certain buildings also produce the smoke columns. In particular the **Electronic Arts** buildings and nearby structures are "live" targets. If for any twisted surly reason, or simply because of basic human destructiveness you feel the need to demolish EA you can take off from San Francisco International Airport, loop the plane and head south. Seven miles southeast

of SFO you will see the intersection of Highways 101 and 92 (it looks like a giant X). Just east and south of this intersection is a pair of low triangular shaped buildings with a common parking lot. The northern structure contains the EA development group and the southern structure contains EA Distribution. Go ahead, make their day! By the way, the tall building just to the east of the EA complex contains the **Ziff-Davis Publishing** division which produces *A+ Magazine* and *MacUser Magazine*. It is not true that CGW Editor Russell Sipe asked me to let you know that his "arch rival," Bob Lindstrom (who is the new Editor at A+ Magazine), is located in the southwest corner office of that building, about 3/4th of the way up.

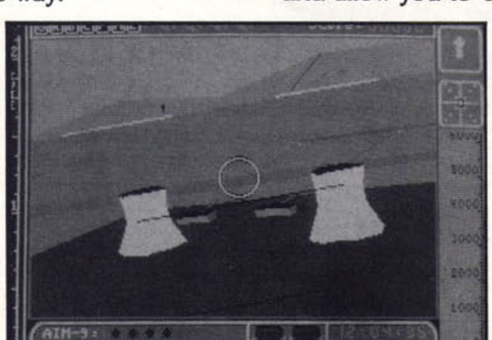
Both 68000 *Jet* and *F-18 Interceptor* are very engaging products. So which is better? Not a fair question for these two. For, as similar as these two products are, they are different enough that picking one over the other would be like asking which is better, an apple or an orange?

To boil the comparison down into basics, *F-18 Interceptor* is a "toy" in the most positive sense of the word, while 68000 *Jet* is more of a "game".

At a recent Writer's Symposium at Electronic Arts Dan Bunten talked about the difference between *games* and *toys*. A game is a competition. Scores are kept, and can be bettered. We interact with the environment of the game in order to post a higher score than our last effort or that of another person. Or, we compete simultaneously with other people to come out the highest score in the game at hand. "Toys" on the other hand, are things which we play with. You play a game, you play *with* a toy.

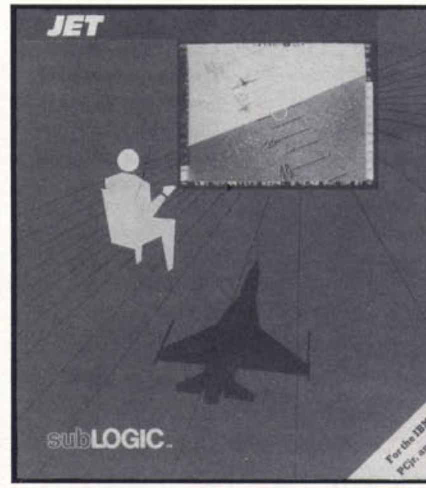
In talking about software "toys" Steve Linhart put it this way:

Toys are a good model for computer entertainment. Children use toys to create, learn, and explore; so do adults. There are already many successful computer toys for adults. These tend to be simulations of existing adult toys, such as sports cars and planes.



The difference between a toy and a game is that you don't win [with] a toy. For example, life . . . is a toy not a game because there is no particular way to win, it's just something you do. (*The Journal of Computer Game Design*, June/July 1988; 5251 Sierra Rd. San Jose, CA 95132).

In *F-18 Interceptor* you are playing *with* a sophisticated flight simulator that adds the feature of hostile aircraft to the "world" you ultimately end up exploring. *JET* is also a sophisticated flight simulator which provides you with a world to explore as well, but the emphasis is on getting a high score as you shoot down MIGs and/or bomb enemy targets.



We should mention that the non-68000 versions of *JET* contains the same basic functions as the 68000 JET. However, not surprisingly, they fall far short in terms of sound and graphics. This writer finds the enemy MIGs to be much more deadly at lower levels in IBM *JET* than in lower levels of the 68000 version. **Hint for 68000 users:** When you are about to be hit by a missile which you have determined you cannot avoid, hold down the "5" key on the keypad to dampen the degree to which the missile hit knocks you off course.

TITLE:	Jet
SYSTEMS:	Apple, C/64, IBM, ST, Amiga, Mac
# PLAYERS:	1-2
PRICE:	$39.95-$49.95
DESIGNER:	Charles Guy (IBM) Chris Green (Amiga)
PUBLISHER:	SubLogic Corp. Champaign, IL

To compare other features of the two products: *JET* has a well-developed air-to-ground combat feature, while air-to-ground is "tacked" on to *Interceptor*. *Interceptor's* HUD display is more realistic than *Jet's* display. Aerial dogfighting is easier and perhaps more satisfying with *Jet* but probably more realistic with *Interceptor*. Both games allow land or sea based operations and allow you to choose between an F-16 Falcon and an F-18 Hornet. As in real life, carrier landings are difficult and require a lot of practice. *Jet* allows you to load SubLogic Scenery Disks. However in the 68000 version, your jet appears oversized when you land on Scenery Disk runways. Finally, 68000 *Jet* permits a modem hook-up whereby you can fly in tandem with a friend.

The bottom line? I like and recommend both, but then again, I also like both apples and oranges.

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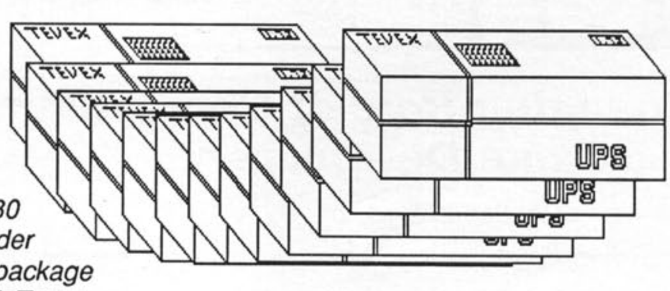
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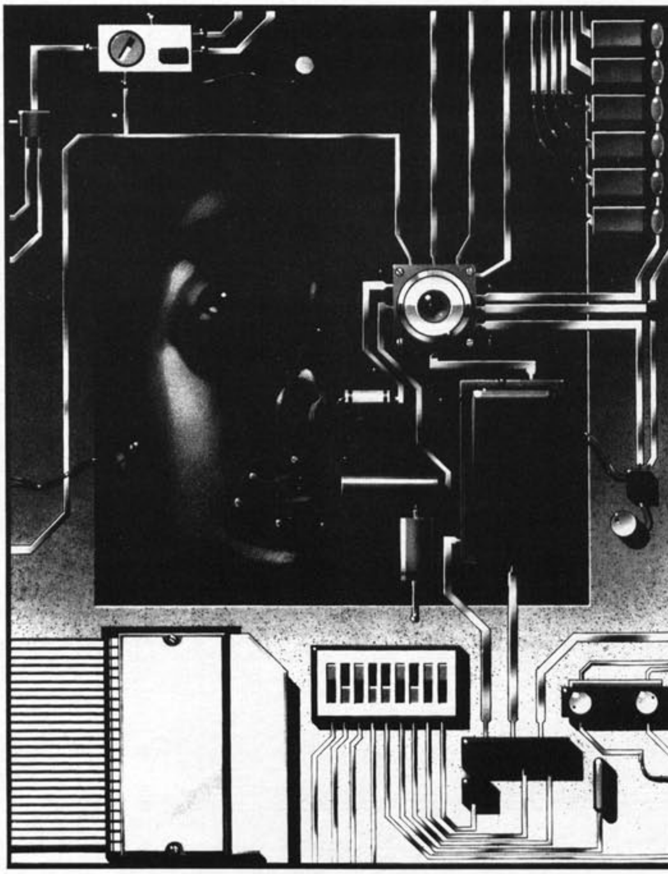
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Over the River and Through the Woods:



The Changing Role of Computer Game Designers

By Don L. Daglow

Where's the River?

Somewhere in the timeless depths of the mid-1960's somebody wrote the first computer game. Within 24 hours of this earth-shaking event, somebody else declared it to be a waste of time, electricity and gray matter.

As I chronicled in "The Dark Ages of Game Design" (CGW #28, p. 12), the game designers of the pre-Apple II days were hobbyists. We hoped to reach a small audience of fellow gamers around the country who, like us, used the late-night "off-peak" hours to sneak in their game playing. In our school, this was necessitated by the fact that until games were kicked off the system, they were eating over 50% of the computer time many weekends. After they were kicked off they were impermissible and blasphemous, and academic computing was once again pure.

The advent of the Apple II in the late '70's gave designers the freedom to work on dedicated machines where no one could tell us that gaming was forbidden. *Apple Trek, Wumpus, Eliza, Adventure, Rogue* and *Zork* all came from mainframe games that made the transition to micros. It should be noted that only in the case of Zork did the designers have the foresight to maintain control of their brainchild and successfully exploit it creatively and commercially.

Not all of us were so insightful. In the mid-seventies I had a fully-functioning fantasy role-playing game on the PDP-10, with both ranged and melee combat, lines of sight, auto-mapping and NPC's with discrete AI. When I bought my Apple, I went back to all my old designs to pick the most promising one to convert . . . and ignored my FRP. Like I say, give the Zork guys credit.

This is the River and I Think We're All Wet

By the summer of 1980, **Mattel** realized that the *Intellivision* video game's success wasn't a single-season affair and set out to hire an in-house game design team. I was lucky enough to be one of the original five programmers hired for that team and eventually ended up as Director of Game Design for Intellivision. I sure as hell didn't know what I was getting myself into, though.

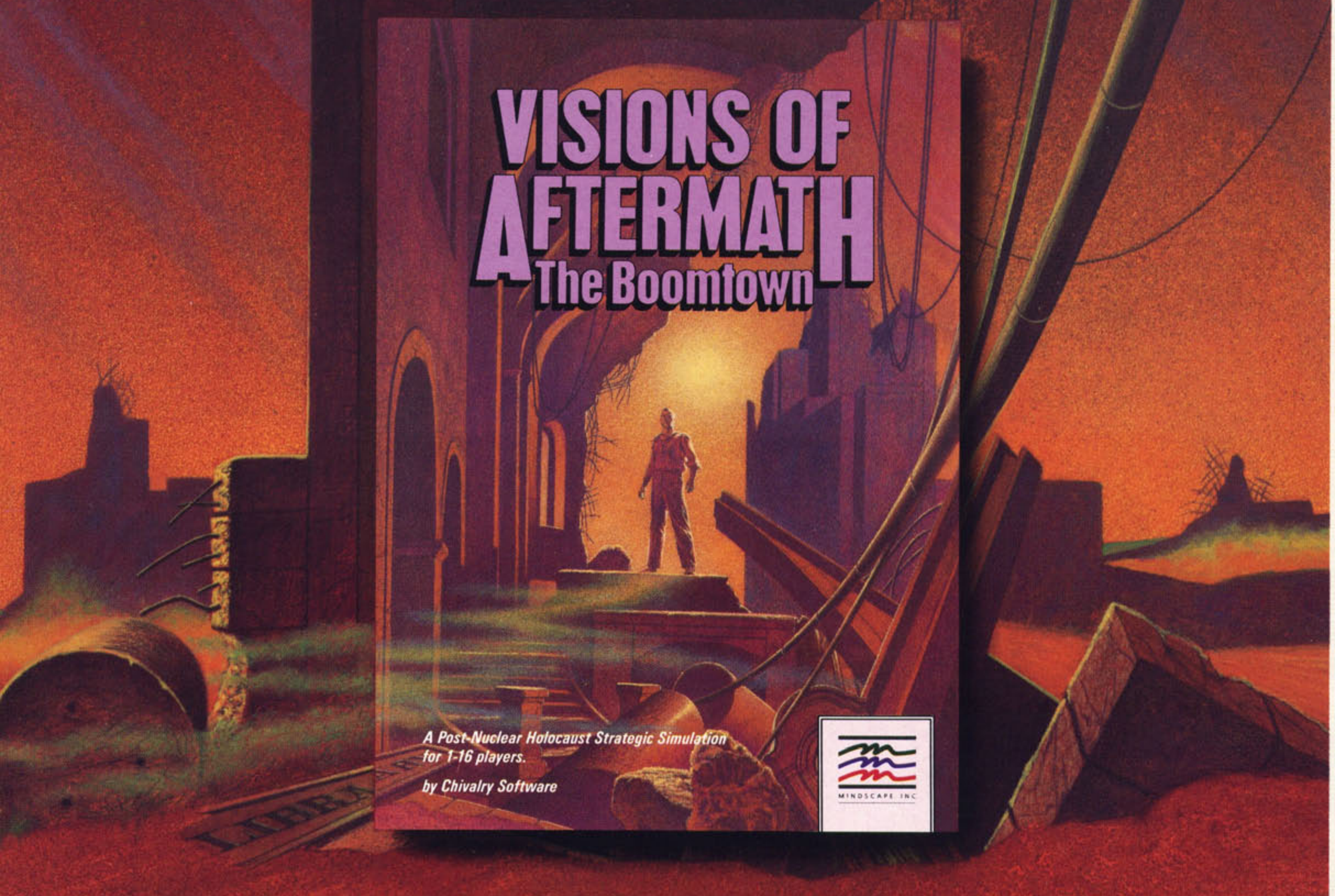
Picture a building converted from an old *Hot Wheels* factory with a second floor added to the interior to hold the game designers—who grew to a staff 110 strong. Look across its expanses and your eyes would scan a seemingly endless sea of cubicles beneath a corrugated metal roof and exposed air conditioning conduits. The walls and ceilings were painted white, the cubicles a consistent gray. There were no windows. It was the Big Company style. It was hardly a creative environment.

Within that environment, however, were some of the most talented game designers you'd ever want to meet. My own team included: Eddie Dombrower, the designer of *Earl Weaver Baseball*; Rick Koenig, author of *Racing Destruction Set* and *Ferrari Formula I*; Connie Goldman, who did graphics for Rick's projects and for *Adventure Construction Set*; and Dave Warhol, whose music and sound effects have graced products from several major publishers. There were several other real talents who, discouraged by the Cartridge Crash of '83, left the business for safer shores.

Life on our white and gray floor went on in a high-security environment. Guards at the front door checked for properly coded security badges. An additional electronic card key was necessary to enter the game design area. This had the effect of cutting us off from almost all outside input, leaving us in an ivory tower where our only contact was with

(Continued on page 42)

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That's right, we'll pay $100.00 to the reader with the highest score in the following trivia quiz. We'll even print your name in the magazine. That's right fame *and* fortune. Enough money for even Dennis Owens of Old Towne, ME to subscribe to CGW for over three years (see Greetings from Paradise in CGW #47, p. 10). Now's the chance for all you who have been claiming to have been readers from the first issue to prove it. In case of a tie, the editors will come up with a special list of questions to determine a sole winner.

For those who haven't been around since our first issue, 1.1, note that three-fourths of the questions will be from more recent issues. The second prize is a complimentary two year subscription to CGW and the third prize is a one year subscription.

Entries must be postmarked no later than September 15, 1988.

1. What is the score of the Dodger baseball game in issue 5.3?

2. Find the "Finkas" (artist's signature) on the cover of 3.5.

3. What blooper can be found in the table of contents of 2.6?

4. Which issue was Vince DeNardo's first issue as *Art Director*?

5. What is the punchline of the Chip and Ferb cartoon on page 33 of 4.3?

6. In what issue did CGW print a fictional ad commenting negatively on the televangelism scandals?

7. In what review did the section header, "A Bier Less Filling," show up?

8. What page number of what issue had only the word, "beep" on it?

9. Which issue of CGW heralded the debut of *Electronic Arts*?

10. What was the name of the robot who won CGW's very first Robotwar Tournament?

11. According to 4.2 (April, 1984), who was born on 1-27-84?

12. What reader won the "Generic Game Design Contest" and what was his prize?

13. In the March, 1988 (#45) issue, one of the "Taking A Peek" descriptions mentioned a " . . . totally radical warrior ninja." What was the name of the game?

14. In which issue were CGW subscribers offered free software and a one month free subscription to Quantumlink?



15. Who is the pilot pictured on page 23 of CGW #31?

16. In a recent issue of CGW, what do Douglas Adams, Isaac Asimov, Jerry Pournelle, and Roger Zelazny have in common?

17. What CGW feature, which originated in *Computer Game Forum*, uses subtitles in parentheses as though they were a description from a restaurant's (or perhaps, tavern's) menu?

18. Which issue of CGW reviewed an extremely realistic medical simulation called *Surgeon*?

19. In which issue of CGW did we satirize ourselves and the rest of the industry with columns like "Taking A Puke," "Readers' Inkblot Device," and "99/4 Boxes of Chips on the Wall?"

20. Who is pictured on page 17 of CGW #32?

21. In which issue of CGW was a "Letter to the Editor" entitled, "Give Me That On-Line Religion!"?

22. Who wrote the "Year In Review" for CGW #33?

23. In which issue of CGW was the Desktop Publishing System which we use to "layout" the magazine pictured?

24. Which issue of CGW was the first regular theme issue?

25. "My Other Boat Is A High Speed Combat Patrol Hydrofoil" was the subtitle to what review?

26. Who wrote the two first person accounts based on *50 Mission Crush* and *B-24*?

27. What particular expertise did the answer to question 26 have in order to write those articles?

28. In what issue were both *Ultima V* and *Wizardry IV: The Return of Werdna* first previewed?

29. What is "The Learning Game?"

30. What was "Euclid vs. Patton" in CGW #39?

31. What do the section headers have in common in the article entitled, "Ramparts and Rodents" in CGW #46?

32. In 1985, one article referenced such games as "Bore in the East," "Blas-to-Cremo," "Firing Squad," and "E.T. & The Turbolaser." What was the title of the article?

33. True or False - Broderbund is a Swedish word according to CGW #40.

34. In the recent "Fog of War" article, which game designer quoted von Clausewitz?

35. According to CGW #46, which entertainment software company had the largest percentage growth in number of employees during 1987?

36. In what city and state did CGW present its Game of the Year Awards in 1987?

37. What issue of CGW had the first "Conversions Received" column?

38. In what setting did "The Rumor Bag" take place in CGW #44?

39. What do the section headers have in common in the article entitled, "You've Come A Long Way, Baby" in CGW #36?

40. What do the section headers have in common in the "Uninvited" review in CGW #39?

41. What is the current name of the game reviewed on page 12 of CGW #30?

42. What was the name of David Cheng's ship which won the first CGW "Cosmic Balance Ship Design Contest?"

43. What recent issue of CGW had a chronological listing of SSI's games by year published?

44. What was "Titans of the Computer Gaming World?"

45. Which issue of CGW featured "A Buyer's Guide to Joysticks and Mice?"

46. In Evan Brooks' *Kampfgruppe* replay in CGW #25, is it the **Germans** or **Soviets** that he suggests have an extremely poor set-up position?

47. Who was the cover artist on CGW #29?

48. What modern aircraft was featured on the cover of CGW #44 and why?

49. In CGW #43, Roger Bohn stated that, in *Mech Brigade*, a good rule of thumb is that 1.x units will be destroyed per pulse of firing. Define x.

50. What was the "Unidentified Aircraft" referred to in CGW #45?

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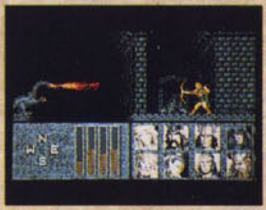
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Destruction Unlimited

Psygnosis' "Obliterator"

by Douglas Seacat

Obliterator is a nice name. It is descriptive, eloquent, and brutal. One thing I have always noticed about **Psygnosis** games is that they usually have appropriate titles. From such beginnings as *Barbarian, Arena, Deep Space,* and *Terrorpods* comes this new action game. As an adventure game following the same format as Barbarian, Obliterator has very nice graphics, a simple plot, and the capacity for keeping the brain-work down to a minimum.

The game begins when a large, seemingly invincible spacecraft moves into human space, completely destroying the entire space fleet. Apparently, man has been pursuing his reckless ways again and has created quite a few enemies in his conquest of the galaxy. All these nasty critters have gotten together and built the previously mentioned spacecraft. Invincible against any external threat, the Federation has decided to beam someone *inside* the ship. They only have one chance and can only send one person. That is where the player comes in and assumes the mantle of the (trumpets, please) Last Obliterator!

Naturally, it is a suicide mission, but as an elite commando, you are certain that you can persevere. Within the enemy ship, it is necessary to: disable three vital ship systems (engines, weapons, and shields), collect an important data pack, and finally, steal a shuttle in order to escape the crippled vessel right before it explodes. It goes without saying that the alien ship is simply jam-packed with bug-eyed aliens, traps, and horrid defensive systems.

Game mechanics are fairly smooth and efficient. The game allows use of either joystick, mouse, or keyboard. While playing with the joystick is permitted, this writer cannot recommend it because several crucial commands cannot be executed from the joystick. Instead, playing with the mouse-keyboard is suggested. The various possible actions include: changing weapons (choosing between four different kinds), moving in the four cardinal directions, jumping, moving into a defensive posture, stopping, entering doorways, picking up items, and of course, firing one's weapon.

It does not take long to become conversant with the commands. Also, experience with the earlier game, Barbarian, will speed the learning process considerably (even though all of the commands are not the same). Once this has been mastered, game-play should proceed quickly. The game isn't difficult, although it is fun. Basically, the Obliterator must roam the decks and elevators of the alien ship, destroy the bulk of aliens encountered, and find useful items.

Since the Obliterator starts the game with only a pistol, the first objective should be to procure other weapons, as well as the ammunition to make them effective. One of the challenges in the game stems from the fact that different creatures require different weapons and the more powerful weapons can carry only limited ammunition. The wise player will use the weakest weapon possible to kill an opponent, saving his more powerful weapons (and ammunition) for the stronger aliens. The pistol works on most of the aliens in the first section of the ship; the rifle is effective against most of the others; and the blaster should be reserved for the rare four or five creatures who are immune to anything else. Note that the bazooka can kill anything, but should be saved for a certain obstacle in the middle of the game which cannot be destroyed by the other weapons.



Players should be aware of the fact that each room has its own distinctive set of monsters. Only a few creatures can be killed permanently, with most reappearing upon reentry into the room. While this "reincarnation" can be annoying, it does keep the game challenging. To even things up, however, the ammunition is also replaced, so it is possible to stock up on vital ammo by moving back and forth between two rooms, picking up ammo each time. Purists may claim that this is cheating, but what's a little cheating in a suicide mission?

TITLE:	Obliterator
SYSTEMS:	Amiga, Atari ST
# PLAYERS:	Solitaire
PRICE:	$39.95
DESIGNER:	Garvan Corbett David H. Lawson
PUBLISHER:	Psygnosis Liverpool, UK

Technically, it is not really necessary to kill every monster on every screen. Doing so is not only a waste of time, but a waste of ammunition, as well. A useful tactic is to hit the "Defense" key while running. This will cause the Obliterator to roll, often right past his enemies. This move not only works on most of the creatures, but several of the traps, as well. However, one should not use this technique in every situation because there is a good reason for killing most of the creatures, the score.

Instead of having a simple intrinsic value, the score is vital in Obliterator. Once all of the tasks have been completed, a countdown to the ship's destruction will begin. The length of this countdown is determined exclusively by the player's score. If the shuttle hasn't been found and activated by the time one's score has reached zero, the ship will explode with the Obliterator on board. This countdown method can cause some disappointing final scores, but it is an ingenious method of making sure the aliens are fought rather than simply avoided.

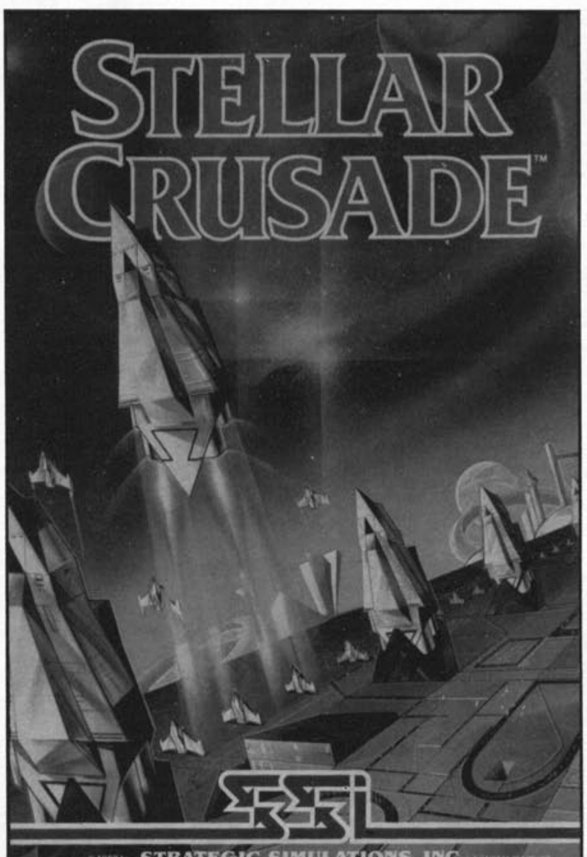
All in all, I found myself enjoying Obliterator. The game is neither particularly original nor extremely difficult, but the graphics are well-executed and the action is plentiful. Pure strategists and exclusive adventure gamers should stay away, but those who like action or want something colorful to showcase on their Amiga or ST will find this game to be a good buy. In other words, know what to expect and you will not be disappointed. After hours of conquest in obscure military campaigns or long days in dungeon corridors, a few minutes of Obliterator can be quite refreshing.

Jihad Junction

SSI Invokes A "Stellar Crusade"

by Hosea Battles

In the 24th Century, both the Corporate League (League) *[Ed.: Unscrupulous capitalists.]* and the People's Holy Republic (P.H.R.) *[Ed.: Despotic communists.]* wish to control the Kiffryn's Cats Star Cluster. When the League began to rapidly explore and exploit planets, this threatened the restrictive trade policies and bureaucratic oligarchy of the People's Holy Republic. Conflict was inevitable and *Stellar Crusade* is the depiction of this struggle.



In solitaire mode, players must play as strategic commander of the League. In the two player mode, of course, one may play either side. On the ST, all game play is mouse-controlled, but the IBM version is restricted to keyboard moderation via the numeric keypad. Both versions utilize pull down menus to enhance the interface.

Balanced Budgets for Defense

TITLE:	Stellar Crusade
SYSTEMS:	Atari ST, IBM
# PLAYERS:	1-2
PRICE:	$49.95 (IBM) $54.95 (Atari ST)
DESIGNER:	Norman C. Koger, Jr.
PUBLISHER:	SSI Mountain View, CA

The key to this game is the fact that it is a Strategic/Economic Space Combat game. Economic decisions are crucial to winning the game. This is not the standard space shoot-'em-up. Unfortunately, this key area of economic determination is also the primary flaw in the documentation. Even though the manual is organized into sections with a heading to match nearly each function in the game, it never clearly explains the economic principles of the game. The allocation of Production Points, as well as the cogent use of Build Points, is critical for fleet and colony maintenance. Yet, the manual offers little guidance for interpreting even basic information provided on the screen. As a reviewer, this writer was forced to call SSI directly in order to discover what the screen was trying to tell me.

Even after reading the rules over and over again, it was impossible to understand the "Research" option. The only reference to be found for this option was one paragraph in the glossary under "Effectiveness." It did not explain how to allocate resources to research, how much it costs to increase each effectiveness level, or how to find out if it is even possible to increase one's effectiveness level. Again, it was necessary to call SSI, only to be told that any unused "Production Points" go to "Research" and it takes approximately 500 Production Points to increase one's level. Since the economic decisions are so crucial to success in the game, one would have hoped for better treatment in the manual.

The mechanics of play consist of two phases, "Economics" and "Movement." It can be a very fast-paced game when combat takes place. Throughout both phases, a three-dimensional map of the quadrant is on the screen. The player can turn this map on or off at will.

During the "Economics" phase, players allocate "Production" and "Build Points" to factories and starports in order to build ships and raw materials. Food production is also handled in this phase. One had best pay attention to this, because food riots could occur on the player's planets and spoil everything. Further, players must assign ships for "Transport Duty" in the "Transportation Pool" and "Escort" ships to protect them. Without escort ships, transports make juicy targets for enemy raiders. It is also necessary to allocate resources for producing: spare parts (to repair ships), rations (to feed soldiers), and armies (to recruit, equip, and pay soldiers). Fortunately, there is an "Economic Report" available to the player which includes a graph on expenditures and suggestions for increasing production.

Command Performances for State Security

During the movement phase, players perform fleet movements, design spaceships, scrap old ships, load/unload transports and assault ships, assign ships to a fleet, assign ships to a "Command," and assign "Commanders" to fleets. A player may only have a maximum of 120 ships per side, a cap of 36 separate fleets, and a limit of 20 ships per fleet.

Players have a group of "Commanders" which can be assigned to a given fleet. Those belonging to the League, for example, have historic code names such as Achilles or Patton. Those belonging to the P.H.R. are provided with biblical code names such as David and Samson. Each com-

mander is rated on a scale of 1 (incompetent) to 5 (brilliant) for Attack/Defense/Assault. When a command ship is destroyed, the commander is destroyed with it and a replacement is placed in the "Commanders Pool." There are more than 36 commanders for each side. Nevertheless, it is important to assign the best commander to each particular command, because a commander's rating considerably affects the outcome of space combat.

Once all fleet movements are completed and opposing fleets end up in the same system, combat occurs.Combat involves both I weapons (warp space) and R weapons (real space). Each can only attack ships in their respective space. Most raiders, for instance, attack from I space. When a weapon is fired, it is destroyed and must be replaced with a spare upon the completion of combat. As combat occurs, explosions take place around the fleets, ships disappear, and the count of weapons diminishes.

If a defender loses space combat, surface combat will commence. At this point, a small screen appears which shows a ship unloading combat troops on the surface of the planet. Surface combat begins and a new combat resolutions screen appears. On this screen is a list of attacking and defending units. As units are destroyed, they disappear from the list. As reflects any type of warfare, the longer the combat lasts, the more population and factories are destroyed. It is, therefore, not unusual to conquer a planet only to discover that it is barren due to the surface warfare.

Finally, repairs may be performed *if* spare parts are available within the system. Without spare parts, the best planned offensive will stall and become a defensive retreat.

One last point with regard to combat must be the consideration of ship designs. In the design mode, all basic ships look the same. However, when one begins adding weapons, defenses, and engines, the ships change shape. Players are given the option of renaming their present ships and christening the new ones they create. The design screen is graphically detailed and extremely user friendly.

Reviewer's Summary for Executive Decision

Though there are not any fancy graphics in this game, the game has an appropriate mix of graphics and text so that it does not clutter the screen. The bulk of the computer's power is utilized in keeping track of the decision points, economic consequences, and strategic results in the game rather than drawing pretty screens. Furthermore, the computer opponent is extremely hard to beat, even on the easiest level of play.

The game offers seven different scenarios. The smallest lasts 10 turns and the largest can last up to 100 turns. Though there is no option for creating one's own scenarios, the scenarios provided can keep any player busy for a long time. One scenario is particularly important. This is the "Exploration Scenario." This teaches players how to establish a colony and build it up to a self-supporting and material producing asset. Since the manual offers a set tutorial which takes a player through three scenarios, it is highly advised that players follow the tutorial before beginning serious play.

There are two minor problems with version 1.0 of the game (on the ST). Both are supposed to be fixed in version 1.1. If the Operation Jericho scenario does not allow the P.H.R. player to move Task Force #22, you have the old 1.0 version. The game locks up at that point and the only way out is to reboot. Also, the eárlier version allows a sudden appearance of ghost ships around turn 44 in all scenarios. Though these ships cannot be destroyed, they do not hinder play. Players who have version 1.0 should contact SSI for a corrected disk.



Overall, once players understand the manual (and that is a large undertaking), this can be a very satisfying game. It is reminiscent of *Imperium Galactum*, but offers more complexity. The strategic and economic elements of the game seem to be excellent in design, but the manual does nothing to help players get into the game. The game can be a worthy addition to any strategy gamer's software library, but only if he is willing to get beyond the early frustration level.

50

AND NOW, FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

Winners of the CGW Essay Contest.

CGW subscribers were asked to complete the sentence, "My most humorous experience while playing a computer game was . . ." The unanimous first choice of the editors and winner of the two year paid subscription to CGW is Steve DeWall of Bethalto, IL. Second choice was Jayson Hogan of Seattle, WA. who will receive a one year paid subscription. All other entrants will have an issue of CGW added to their present subscription.

Editors' Choice Award:

. . . the night my band of adventurers was about to enter another dungeon and I heard a noise on the basement steps behind me. It was the baby's walker tumbling down. "The baby is falling down the steps!" I screamed. Fortunately, he had pushed the walker down the steps and was fine. I rushed up the steps and picked him up. Just as we got into the kitchen, my wife came around the corner at full speed. She was stark naked and covered with soap. When wet soapy feet hit lineoleum, disaster is inevitable. All three of us ended up under the kitchen table, a little shaken, but unhurt.

Runner-Up:

. . . the time I was playing *Dungeon Master* and left the console long enough to cross the room. I noticed some movement on the screen and yelled across the room to my friend, "Kill that Beholder before it kills my characters!" My Mom, thought I was talking to her and, never having used my computer or the mouse before, picked up the mouse and attempted to kill the monster by applying the mouse directly to the screen and pressing the button furiously. Needless to say, the Beholder proceeded to kill all of us, but it was hilarious to watch Mom use that mouse.

OMNITREND'S

PALADIN

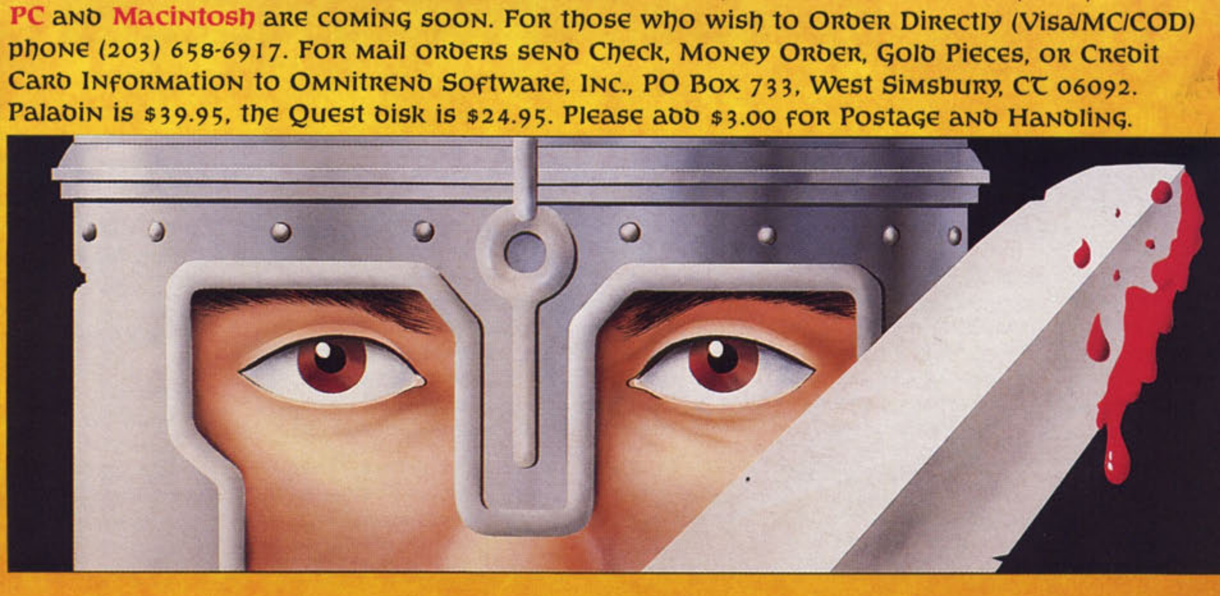
In the Days of Legends, there was a young Paladin named Brandon. Brandon had Heard that the King of a Far Kingdom was Bestowing Knighthood upon those Souls who Proved themselves Worthy of the Title. Resolute upon the Goal of Knighthood, Brandon gathered a Fine Band of Nine to accompany him. He took Mages, with their Arcane Magics and Strange Potions.  He called upon Swordsmen,  with their Sharp Blades. With him came Rangers and even a Thief who had Reformed His Ways. Their journey took them across Fierce Deserts and Swift Rivers,  through Steamy Jungles and into Caverns  that Descended to the Very Heart of the Earth. On their Long and Perilous Journey, they Did Battle Nasty Trolls  who carried Great Axes. Undead Zombies  Plagued them and Dragons  Burned Their Hides. Sorcerers  Exchanged Orbs of Fire with their Wise Mage and Cast Mind Stuns on the Unwary.

All of this happened with **Fine Animation** and the Battles Did Ring with **Thrilling Digitized Sound** (excluding IBM version). They found that the **Program Includes Ten Challenging Quests.** They also discovered that an additional **Quest Disk with 16 Quests Is Available.** After a Time, when they wished to Change Their Fate, there was a **Quest Builder Program** which allowed them to Modify Existing Quests and Create New Ones to Please their Friends and Confound their Enemies. Even Valiant Warriors from the Far Future were not forgotten, for they could **Import Breach Squad Leaders as Paladins.**

Omnitrend's Paladin is available for the **Amiga** and the **Atari ST.** Versions for the **IBM PC** and **Macintosh** are coming soon. For those who wish to Order Directly (Visa/MC/COD) phone (203) 658-6917. For mail orders send Check, Money Order, Gold Pieces, or Credit Card Information to Omnitrend Software, Inc., PO Box 733, West Simsbury, CT 06092. Paladin is $39.95, the Quest disk is $24.95. Please add $3.00 for Postage and Handling.







OMNITREND SOFTWARE

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"STRIKE FLEET" COMMAND BRIEFING

by Ronald F. Williams

In this article, a CGW subscriber shares his successful approach to Electronic Arts' and Lucasfilm Games' "Strike Fleet." As in our occasional "Strategically Speaking" column of strategy tips, CGW cannot playtest all the hints received. Let the player beware.

TO:
All commanders

FROM:
CINCLANT-FLT

SUBJECT: Tactical Considerations

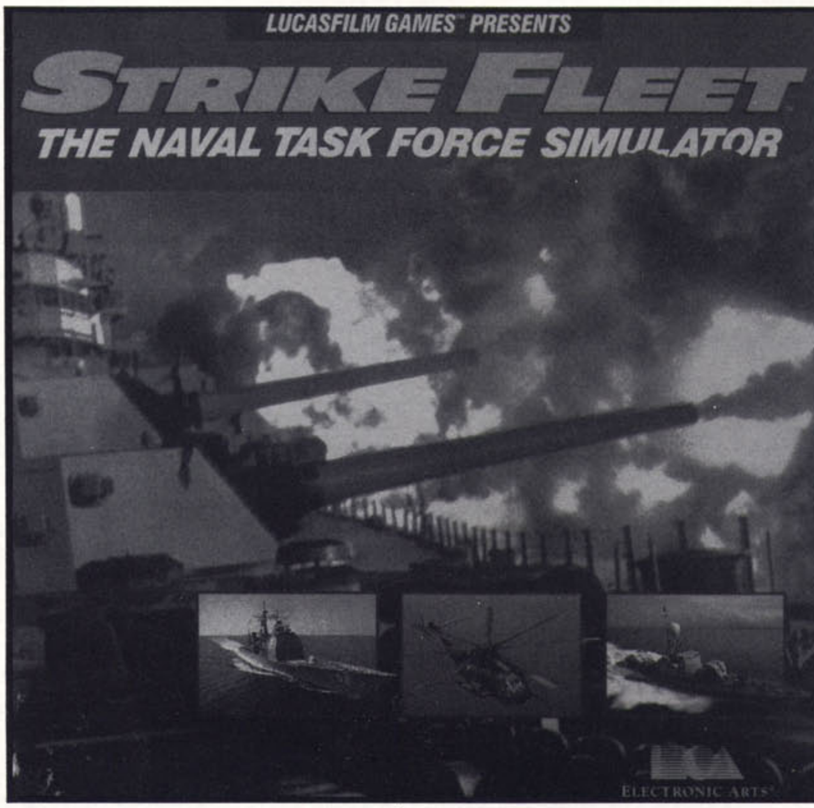
Evaluation of tactics utilized in recent engagements has resulted in the following recommendations.

1. Create and *use* a matrix of ship capabilities (as in the sample printed with this article) so you know at a glance *what* you have versus *what* you are against. It will also assist you in selection of the best ships to utilize in a given situation.

Note that for most of the Russian scenarios, a preference for DDG Class (*Arleigh Burke*, if possible) is recommended. Two DDGs carry more anti-missiles than a single *Ticonderoga*. *Spruance* DDs are to be avoided at all cost.

The primary strategy should be centered upon either *launching* a first strike (targeting the *Slava* class as a top priority, because of its matching gun distance) or *intercepting* Russian missiles first, launching a limited counter-strike by utilizing the *Secret Helo Tactic* (see item 2, below) to help deplete their anti-missiles, and finally, *gunning them down*.

2. Use the *Secret Helo Tactic* to compensate for the Russian superiority in anti-missiles. Launch a helicopter and keep it within 2000 meters of its mother ship. Then, when the Russians fire on it (1-5 missiles), manually fly it back to the mother ship at full speed. Upon landing the helicopter, the Russian missiles will explode without damaging either the helicopter or ship. This is undoubtedly not realistic, but it works!



3. Utilize a quick ship change/anti-missile methodology. Track the first incoming missile from the *Target Ship* by using the "M" key and launch an anti-missile. Go to the next missile by means of the "M" key, "Enlarge Map Range" to a size that will include the next target ship. Then, use the "C" key to toggle to the targeted ship. Remember to keep your anti-missile weapon highlighted. The speed and ease of use will greatly enhance a ship's potential for survival.

4. Commanders should change their flagship whenever the current flagship's anti-missile inventory is reduced below a quantity of 12. Backfires *always* fire at the flagship, so do not be caught unawares.

5. When facing enemy aircraft of the *Backfire Kingfish* class, always wait until the craft are within 28 kilometers before launching an anti-missile. In this manner, the success probability for interception is 95% assured. The success probability decreases proportionally beyond this range.

6. Commanders who deploy more than one task force in the Russian scenarios and hence, encounter dual attacks (i.e. surface and submarine) during a battle, should change all surface ships' speed and direction in order to stay out of gunnery range and concentrate on the submarine threat.

7. In terms of surface combat, the doctrine demands opening range. It is sometimes effective to close on the enemy and alter speed in order to compensate for gun deflection, but one should always reverse direction before entering the enemy gun range. Further, when hits drop enemy speed, one's own speed should be dropped in order to continue effective fire. 90% of the time, this is effective.

SUBJECT: Bugs and Useful Pesticides

In the C-64/128 version, some program errors and possible solutions have been noted.

1. Scenario 9.3 ("The Road to Kuwait") seems to have a map/location problem when the location movement command is used on the Fleet or Task Force Map. The program has a tendency to use the next lower map for reference. Consequently, if the player does not refer to

the lower level map, ships will usually run aground.

Solution: Commanders should move the ship slowly (four knots) into a position behind the next closest ship and follow until the *Depth Warning* disappears.

2. Scenario 9.8 ("Escape to New York") does *not* provide the *Arleigh Burke* class DDGs (if replacements for game default ships) with the two LAMPS helicopters that should be standard equipment.

Solution: Commanders should be certain that these ships are accompanied by one equipped with helicopters.

3. Scenarios 9.8 and 9.9 do not allow lock-in of the *Sonar On* command for warships, nor does it allow non-combatants to permanently toggle *Sonar On*.

Solution: Commanders, particularly those responsible for warships, should consistently keep the sonar status as *Sonar On/Radar Off*.

A Matrix of Ship Capabilities

	Point Value	Speed Knots	Gunnery Rating	Anti-Missile	Anti Ship	ASROCS	Torpedoes	Qty Held
U.S.				[Qty] Range in Kilometers				
CG - Belknap	25	32	22	[40] 102*	[8] 102	[20] 8	[24] 8	1
CG - New Ticon Bunker/Mobile/ Antietam/Leyte	60	32	22	[82] 102*/	[8] 102 [24] 583	[16] 8	[24] 8	2
CG - Old Ticon Ticon/Yktwn/ ValFrge/TomGates	60	32	22	[68] 102*	[8] 102/ [8] 583	[12] 8	[24] 8	2
DD - Spruance	10	32	22	[8] 32**	[8] 102	[24] 8	[16] 8	2
DD - Arleigh	20	32	22	[70] 102	[8] 102/ [8] 583	[12] 8	[24] 8	0
DDG - Kidd/Callah Scott/Chandler	14	32	22	[52] 33	[8] 102	[16] 8	[16] 8	2
FFG - Oliver Haz	5	28	15	[36] 33	[4] 102		[24] 4	2
PHM - Pegasus	3?	48	15		[8] 102			
LAMPS -		144					2	

Chaff [24]
Phalanx [24] [FFG 6] 2100 meters

* = Mach 2+/** = Mach 3

	Speed	Gun	Anti-Missile	Anti-Ship	Torpedoes	Phalanx
U.S.S.R.						
Sub - Alfa	45				[22] 4-20	
Sub - November	30				[18] 4-20	
Sub - Victor	32				[8] 4-20	
DDG - Kashin	37	11	[22] 55	[4] 80	[10] 4-20	
BC - Kirov	33	8	[96] 81	[20] 540	[16] 4-20	120
CG - Kynda	36	11	[22] 55*	[16] 540	[12] 4-20	
FFG - Krivak	32	11	[18] 15*		[16] 4-20	
CG - Slava	32	22	[64] 81	[16] 555	[16] 4-20	90
LSM - Polnochny	16		[16] 10			
LST - Ropucha	16	6	[32] 10			
BACKFIRE TU22	900		"Kingfish"	[3] 555		

*Has some Anti-ship capability

	Speed	Gun	Anti Miss	Anti Ship	Torpedoes	Helo's	Chaff
Argentina							
Fri - Type A69	24	11		[4] 33-70	[18] 8		
Sub - Guppy	15				[10] 4-20		
Sub - Salta	23				[14] 4-20		
Super Entendard	650			[1] 33-70			
British							
DD - Sheffield	32	11	[22] 17		[24] 8	1	16
FF - Broadsword	32	4	[12] 6	[4] 33-70	[18] 8	2	16
Lynx	?				[2] 8		
Iran							
LPC - Fst At Crsr	48	?					
Fri - Saam Class	39	11	[9] 6	[5] 25			8
Mirage	800			[2] 33-70			

Yes, We Have No Bananas!

Cinemaware's "The Three Stooges"

Reviewed by David M. Wilson

Either I had just put in the wrong disk, or **Cinemaware** had put a *Defender of the Crown* disk in a box labeled, *The Three Stooges*. There, on my monitor for the entire world to see was the familiar Defender of the Crown title screen and the computer was loudly playing the rousing Defender of the Crown theme. Then, suddenly, radio static took over as these three familiar stooges marched out onto the screen. Imagine my shock when Larry said, "This looks like a kid's game." It was really Larry's voice. Moe said, "Shut up!" and Curly barked viciously. This gave way to the authentic "Stooges" theme music and the real game began. Right then I knew that I was in for a slapstick treat with Cinemaware's latest release. They had captured the Three Stooges mystic.



TITLE:	The Three Stooges
SYSTEMS:	Amiga, C-64/128
# PLAYERS:	Solitaire
PRICE:	$39.95
DESIGNERS:	John Cutter Timothy Skelly David Thiel Bill Zielinski
PUBLISHER:	Cinemaware Westlake Village, CA

Cinemaware's Three Stooges game continues the company's fine tradition of innovative games with excellent graphics and sound. Cinemaware calls their products "interactive movies" rather than "games" and in this product, players will almost feel as if they are watching one of the trio's popular short subjects when they watch the credit sequences.

There are, as one would expect, differences between the Amiga and C-64/128 versions. The Amiga version has sharper and clearer imagery and more clarity in the sound effects and digitized voice tracks, but the Commodore's opening screens were much more like the original opening of the trio's films. Both versions, however, played identically.

As the plot of the "game" unfolds, players discover that the wicked banker, I. Fleecem, is about to foreclose on the orphanage's mortgage. Moe, Larry, and Curly declare that they'll get the money ($5,000) necessary to keep the orphanage in the good-hearted widow's hands. If players score exceptionally well (earning $7,500), they can even provide those much-needed repairs to the house which the widow has been putting off. If they want to "marry" the widow's beautiful daughters, they will need even more.

So, our boys are off and seeking odd jobs. This is done by a moving hand at the top of the screen. The hand moves between six different rectangles (lined up like one side of a *Monopoly* game) and the player tries to hit the joystick button when the hand is on a good choice. The bad choices are mousetraps, bankers, or any game segment that the player hasn't mastered, yet. Selecting the mousetraps causes the "guys" to lose a day while they nurse Moe's hand. Stopping on the banker will incur both charges (business license fees, back taxes, etc.) and ridicule. Of course, players will try to make good selections, but as the game progresses, the hand moves faster and faster.

One of the ways the boys earn money is simply by finding money. They find wallets and money bags all over the place. If only life were this simple. Nevertheless, it is a real laugh to watch all three bend over to pick up the wallet and bump their heads together. Any Stoogephile knows what happens next. Moe slaps Curly and Larry (with appropriate sounds and exclamations).

Another method they use to earn money is by serving pies, which naturally leads to a pie fight as in the short subject, "Hoi Polloi." Players can enjoy throwing pies without having the mess (or the waste). $10.00 is paid for each pie "served" by smacking a guest in the face. Throwing and ducking is not as easy as it sounds, however. Remember that players are using one joystick to control three stooges.

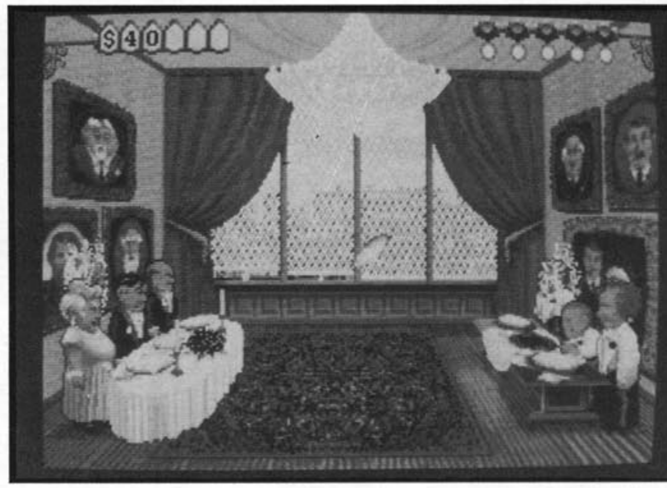
The hospital always needs gurney pushers and the stooges love to push gurneys. Therefore, in the segment entitled "Doctors" (based on the award winning short subject, "Men In Black," which, in turn, satirized the popular medical film, "Men In White"), players collect money for each hall they pass, while they bob, weave, and dodge around nurses, wheelchairs, and patients on crutches. The patients on crutches are, by far, the most fun to knock down, but these collisions will cost time, since the goal of the player is to reach the operating room at hall 20 before the timer runs out. The Amiga version adds points for catching flying medicine bottles and other supplies. The C-64/128 version misses this extra feature.

"Boxing" is based on "Punch Drunks" and the arcade game is an example of effective use of the split screen. The screen is divided into three sections. In the upper left portion of the screen, Curly is shown, in static images, boxing his life away. In the upper right, the stopwatch which is being used

to time the round is shown ticking away. The lower portion of the screen is what is important to game play, however. It seems that, as in the film, Curly can only win the fight if he hears the tune, "Pop Goes The Weasel." Just before the fight, however, Larry sits on the violin that he was planning on playing the tune upon. Now, Larry must rush into town and get something to play the tune on, either a violin or radio. He must avoid sleeping dogs, wooden crates, open doors, streetlamps, and ice blocks. The catch (which sometimes seems like a Catch-22) is that he only has until the fifth round to return. This is a difficult task to say the least.

In "Crackers," Curly tries to win the cracker eating contest at the lodge. In this portion of the game (the idea taken from the short subject, "Dutiful But Dumb"), players wrangle with ornery oysters. They grab the spoon. The screen digitized directly from the film was the most impressive part of this segment.

Another arcade segment can be important to the game. It is the slapfight. This segment will not directly provide the stooges with any money, but it helps to slow down the hand which selects the game segments. The player becomes Moe and must win this sadistic battle of nitwits with Larry and Curly. Players who want to increase their chances of hitting will have to resort to faking by moving Moe's hand repeatedly before striking. The more hits Moe gives Larry and Curly, the slower the hand used in selection will move. Hint: Curly seems to be the biggest sucker in the slapfight.



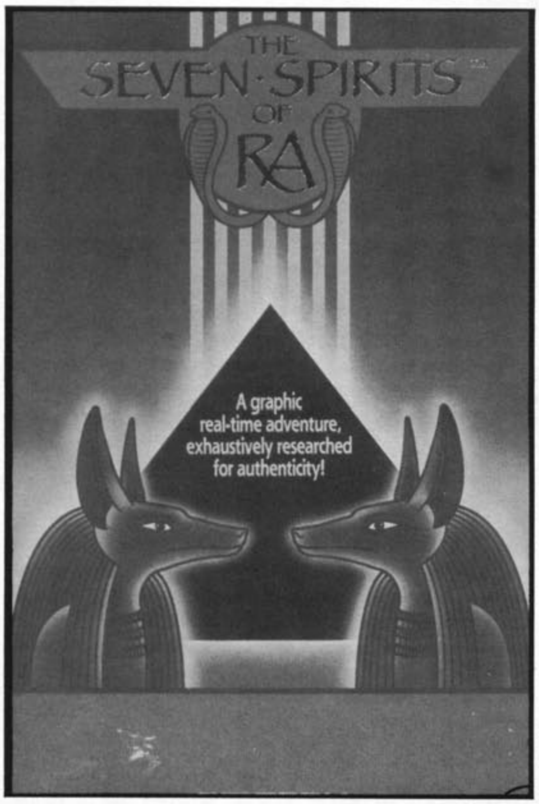
Stoogephiles who tire of the arcade elements in the game will enjoy the Trivia Contest. In this event, players answer multiple choice questions about the boys' career. Before playing the game, players should read the documentation which details a lot of the history of The Three Stooges. Anyone who does not read the book, cannot expect to do well in the Trivia contest. The C-64/128 version has three questions at $200 each, but the Amiga offers a larger prize and more animation/sound in these sequences.

Okay, The Three Stooges game is not for everybody, especially if you are the kind of person who doesn't want to ever see another The Three Stooges film, again. For those of us who remember the boys from our childhood with a great deal of fondness, however, the game is simultaneously a delight and piece of "living" memorabilia. In fact, this game gave me the courage to watch a few episodes. If you are, or were, a fan, you will enjoy this game for its fresh approach to some old friends.

The Seven Spirits of Ra

by Alan Roberts

If you've grown tired of the generic pseudo-medieval fantasy games, come with me to the deserts of Egypt. Here, since the dawn of civilization, the tale has been told of Osiris, the pharaoh of the gods, and his murder, rebirth, and revenge.



The Seven Spirits of Ra is arcade/adventure (80% arcade/20% adventure), giving you the chance to play the god Osiris. Some may prefer more puzzle-solving, but the game is certainly better than most of the pure arcade games on the market.

Getting Your Just Deserts (Game Objective)

The goal of the game is to return to the land of the living. Rats, snakes, bats, vultures, crocodiles, ghosts, mummies, Seths (demons) and the arch-villain Set will oppose this quest. Each time you "die" (a relative term in the land of the dead), one of your seven lives floats away. Lose all and be cast in the fiery lake of Abat. Not all obstacles in the game can be overcome by combat. Physical obstructions bar your way as well. Fortunately, each animal species is ruled by a "Master," and once you defeat the Master, you can transform yourself into its shape, enabling you to bypass those obstacles. Even your fellow gods will test you. The jackal-headed Anubis, the crocodilian Sobek, the four-armed Sekhmet, and your own wife Isis must be appeased. You must pay attention to hints scattered throughout the game. Also, you can regain lost health by finding and eating food.

Title:	The Seven Spirits of Ra
System:	IBM (5.25" disks, free exchange for 3.5")
Price:	$49.95
Designer:	Macrocom, Inc.
Publisher:	Sir-Tech Software Ogdensburg, NY

Ankh if you love Isis (An Overview)

Let us embark on a brief tour of the game (those of you who'd rather discover for yourselves what's on the other side of the tomb may skip down to the next section). You are on the royal barge when treacherous guards pop up with swords drawn. What happens? You get annihilated. Next thing you know, you are in the Duad (the land of the dead). There are three pyramids here and a section of riverfront property infested with hostile wildlife. The entrances to the pyramids are flashing squares marked with ankhs (a cross with a loop at the top). Notice that the door to the central pyramid is out of reach.

Inside the pyramids you might find nourishment, weapons, and treasure (who says you can't take it with you?). Each pyramid hides the gateway to the other realms (in the advanced game, which gate leads to which land is randomly determined): the Swamps of Sebat, the City of Tombs and the Caverns of Isis. Somewhere in the caverns is the portal to the Passage of Rebirth. After you answer the questions of Isis, you will be reunited with any lives you might have lost in combat. You'll need them. As you pass through the gates of rebirth, you are reincarnated as Horus, the avenger. In the center of this swamp is the Stronghold of Set, who can transform himself into any creature or guardian you have met. If you are victorious, you rise into the heavens and ride the celestial barge with Ra. A short optional philosophy lecture follows.

Undercurrents in the Underworld (Complaints)

There should be some way to choose the "silence" option *before* the introduction music begins. Some of us must face the wrath of roommates or spouses who like to sleep undisturbed. What makes an annoying situation worse is that the only way to save a game is to quit and restart, and, literally, "face the music" again.

Another problem deals with movement. As you move Osiris, he goes to the edge of the screen. The screen scrolls along as Osiris strolls along, rarely allowing you to see trouble before you step in it. The layout is awkward: while most keys used in the game are sensibly near the left-hand "home keys", one vital function is "p" for pick up (it would have been more logical to use "g" for get). Even if you have a joystick, you must use the keyboard periodically.

While it is very clear how much damage Osiris has taken, one can only guess how much fight an enemy has left. This is especially annoying with Set. You find yourself wondering if he is just tough or if a specific attack is a complete waste of time.

The game seems unevenly weighted in favor of arcade sequences. Even when players must answer a question, they have an unlimited number of guesses (unless there is a pack of nasties hard on their heels). This could use refinement.

Divine Aspirations (Compliments)

Although saving a game is not as painless as it might be, you *can* save up to nine times per disk. While the graphics themselves are not outstand-

ing, the colors in particular are brighter and offer more variety than I've ever seen on a CGA screen. The game also ran on my Hercules-compatible *Compaq* screen. You must run the program from a backup "play disk" or off the hard disk (the original being used as a "keyed master disk").

There is no hint book, but the game is backed by Sir- Tech's Hotline Hint Department and Disk Repair Service. Also, with many adventure games, once you've solved the game you might as well reformat the disk. With the Seven Spirits, however, there is an "advanced" game option. The monsters are tougher, you can't regain strength by resting, and the layout has had some minor changes. The questions are the same, though.

Personally, I'm delighted with the idea of using non-European mythology as a basis for an adventure game. The book that comes with the program contains a short section on Egyptian religious thought. This is the first game I've played all year that actually *taught* me something.

Even though the game is not as tough as it should be, the game is worthy of an above average recommendation and it must be given an extremely strong recommendation for arcade addicts and teachers.

All's Pharaoh in Love and War (Hints)

[Ed.: Warning! The following material contains specific hints and strategies.]

Your first item of business is to find the sword, the only weapon you can get without transforming. Get the staff of fireballs and lightning bolts ASAP. Learn to juggle these three weapons quickly, as some monsters are vulnerable to only one or two attack forms.

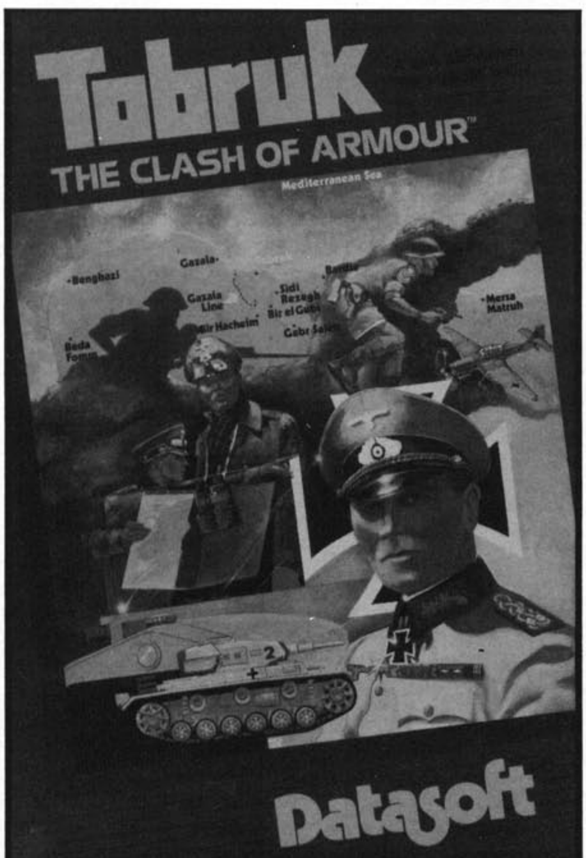
Fireballs travel a short distance and explode, while lightning bounces. Use caution; if your opponent is too close, you'll both take damage. Fight ghosts in a large room (they are invulnerable when walking through walls) and use the Staff of Fire (it has a faster rate of fire). You can only have *one* missile in the air at one time (from either staff), so avoid using lightning in wide-open spaces unless necessary. There is a patch of water in the swamps. Lure your enemies here, where you can maneuver (remember, you can only use weapons, pick up or drop items in human form).

Also monsters and food are placed randomly. If you don't like what you see when you cross through a gate, back out and try again.

Tobruk: The Clash of Armour

Review by M. Evan Brooks

Tobruk is one of the newer simulations covering desert warfare during World War II. **Datasoft** has attempted to bridge the gap between arcade gamers and strategy wargamers in this release.



Look and Feel: Graphics and Documentation

Tobruk's map and character set are very reminiscent of **Microprose**'s *Decision in the Desert* (Gazala scenario), except the former is not as crisp or detailed. Since *Tobruk* was released in 1988 and *Decision* in 1985, this gives one pause for thought.

The documentation is adequate. The rules are explained, and a historical background briefing is given. However, the historical analysis is a cursory "bare-bones" narrative. No historical delineation of tactics or operational strategy is given.

TITLE:	Tobruk: The Clash of Armour
SYSTEMS:	C-64/128
PLAYERS:	1-2
PRICE:	$34.95
DESIGNERS:	Steven R. Williams
PUBLISHER:	Datasoft Chatsworth, CA

A brief bibliography is included. For those interested in additional background to the Gazala Campaign, this reviewer would suggest: *Atlas of the Second World War* (ed. Peter Young), *Panzer Battles* (MG F.W. von Mellenthin), *Rommel* (Desmond Young), or *The Desert Generals* (Correlli Barnett).

The Play Is The Thing: Mechanics

Joystick operated, *Tobruk* is easy to use. Upon booting, one may select either novice or expert levels. The only difference is that at the expert level, the British computer opponent is more aggressive and mobile.

In solitaire mode, one may only choose German. With two players, both German and British options are available.

Additionally, one may choose the arcade subgame option (on or off) and a previously-saved game may be loaded for play.

Tobruk is played in discrete player turns. Each day consists of two movement and assault phases (Axis first) followed by resupply and the command phase (air/engineer support).

Movement next to an enemy unit initiates combat, and one may use the arcade option at this time (assuming that at least one AFV [armored fighting vehicle] is available).

During the command phase, one may utilize air and engineer support. Air support consists of allocating assets between air superiority, air strike and interdiction; engineer support consists of allocating "spanners" (the British term for wrenches, showing Tobruk's British origins) between battlefield vehicle recovery, sabotage of enemy vehicles or mine operations. This use of engineer assets is an innovation and illustrates their importance. However, aside from the mine/countermine operations, the engineer operations are "hidden" from the user and their actual impact is difficult to determine.

Strategically, control of Tobruk determines the victor; alternatively, reducing the enemy to two units will also yield victory.

Based upon the minefields, early operational movement by the Axis is virtually pre-determined. A flanking movement southwards should engage Bir Hacheim (historically defended by elements of the Free French and the Foreign Legion).

Countermine operations should seek a path through the minefield in the region of "The Cauldron". When the path is cleared, mobile elements should accelerate through the gap and move onto Tobruk. The southern elements will assist in this operation, and depending upon tactical finesse and expertise, Tobruk should fall without any real problem.

The basic problem with the simulation is that alternative strategies are unavailable. The northern Axis forces (Italian divisions) have a mobility factor of "1"; since most German forces (which are located in the south) have a mobility factor of "6", it does not take a Clausewitz to determine optimum strategic maneuver.

Assuming that the Axis is careful to move his supply dumps forward, the British computer opponent is easy to defeat. Attacks in the north are wasteful for either player; mobility is lacking, and the computer opponent leaves much of the British force structure alone. Historically, the British responded piecemeal and without any coherent command strategy, but this did not have to occur.

(Continued on page 41)

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Scorpion's Mail



Well, it's August, and Fred is off at the annual Grues Convention being held (as usual) in the Dark Room of Colossal Cave. I understand that this year they're going to try and get Daylight Savings Time repealed (grin). Anyhow, with Fred away and the dog days of summer upon us, this is a good time to trek into the cool back room and peek into the (overflowing) mailbag.

Before we get to the letters, though, I'd like to remind everyone that it really is necessary, if you live in the United States, to enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your questions. Otherwise, you aren't going to get a reply (a SASE is not necessary if you live outside the US).

Also, I really do try to get a reply out the day after I receive a letter, and usually can manage that. However, mail service has been very erratic lately. Sometimes a letter can take as much as a week or more to reach me, when another letter from someone else in the same state (or even city) will arrive in my box in only a couple of days. I have never figured out why this is so, but it is. So when you write, keep in mind that a response could be delayed by the vagaries of the US Postal Service.

Finally, I am not able to provide back issues, or copies of articles that appeared in previous issues, of CGW. You have to write directly to the CGW address to order back issues (copies of individual articles are not generally available). Check the listing of back issues before ordering anything. Some back numbers become sold out and if the issue you want is not listed, it is no longer available (photocopies of articles from out of print issues run $1.00 each). Now, on to the games!

Wasteland (clues carefully irradiated over a glowing atomic pile): A number of people are having some problems with opening the cylinders at Base Cochise. What is needed here are some keys (NOT secpasses); if you don't have one for each cylinder, it's very likely that you missed something at the Citadel. Go over each room thoroughly. Also, there is a pattern involved here, which can be figured out only by trial and error.

Bard's Tale I (answers served "on the rocks"): Some folks are being puzzled by the "one of cold" riddle in Kylearan's Tower. This one is actually simple to answer, if you've paid enough money to the bartenders at the taverns.

Bard's Tale III (hints displayed on a bed of "iceberg" lettuce): The Ice Keep in Gelidia seems to be a popular problem these days, specifically getting past the wards of the three towers. If you don't mind freezing a bit (or even if you do), wander around the outdoors until you locate the hut. Inside you will find something to put you on the track of the solution. Don't overlook the phrases by the wards, and keep your manual handy (you'll be referring to it often).

Beyond Zork (silken solutions with a dash of color): Caterpillars

seem to be in short supply here (grin). Most people know that these are "baby butterflies", but they are stuck on how to change the butterfly back to a caterpillar. This one is a bit tricky, but with a little thought and experimentation, you may be able to grind out the answer.

Return of Werdna (pre-sliced advice in cube form): Several people are getting a little ahead of themselves in this one by marching up into the cube before finishing everything below, especially Hell. Unless all the puzzles (except the witch) are completed, going into the cosmic cube isn't going to help you much, and you certainly won't be able to get out of it (this IS a one-way trip). Take some time to get everything else done first, so you can avoid frustration.

Ultima V (a partial list of dangerous food supplements): A surprising number of people are having trouble keeping up their Avatar status. Usually this is a result of taking things that don't belong to them, especially crops from the fields to supplement food supplies. These crops aren't yours to take. You really have to buy food in the towns. Taking food from tables isn't quite as bad, but should also be avoided. Remember, Avatars are good and good people don't steal. However, it is ok to take things that are in abandoned areas. Also, on a different problem, before you enter the final dungeon, do make sure you have everything you need with you. The entrance is strictly one-way. You can't change your mind and go back out again.

Might & Magic (a savoury hint roasted to a "golden" brown): A bunch of folks have gotten pretty far into the game, only to discover they are lacking the gold key, and usually because they forgot to search in a certain stronghold. The only thing to be done in this case is to go back and re-do the first task of the game. After its successful completion, revisit the stronghold and search at the proper time.

That's about it for now. Remember if you need help with an adventure game, you can reach me in the following ways:

On Delphi: visit the GameSIG (under the Groups and Clubs menu). On GEnie: stop by the Games RoundTable (type: Scorpia to reach the Games RT). On The Source: Send SMail to ST1030. By US Mail: (Don't forget the SASE if you live in the US!): Scorpia, PO Box 338, Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028.

Until next time, happy adventuring!



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The Stars... My Destiny

by William "Biff" Kritzen

In 2815 A.D., the majority of the human race is afraid of space. They are cloistered in the Nine Worlds (Earth and eight colonized planets) in a region called the Galactic Fringe. Even though space travel has been practical since the invention of the dual-axis hyperdrive in 2257, humankind's attempt to colonize "Beyond the Boundary" came to an abrupt halt in 2490. The "Space Plague," a gargantuan epidemic caused by an organism of alien origin, killed more than half the humanoid population of the galaxy, threatened the extinction of civilization, and forever changed mankind's attitude towards space.

Now, a Space Patrol enforces the "Boundary," that one-way border around the Nine Worlds in order to prevent anything like the "Space Plague" from ever happening again. Now, anyone may leave the area enclosed by the Boundary, but they may not return.

Thus far, the Boundary has proven effective in keeping ships from entering the Nine Worlds for three centuries, keeping humanity safe from the unknown. Of course, this does provide for a bit of stagnation, as well. After all, no new discoveries, no new challenges, and countless lost opportunities hardly seem compatible with a growing standard of living. Finally, there are those who sense that something is amiss . . .

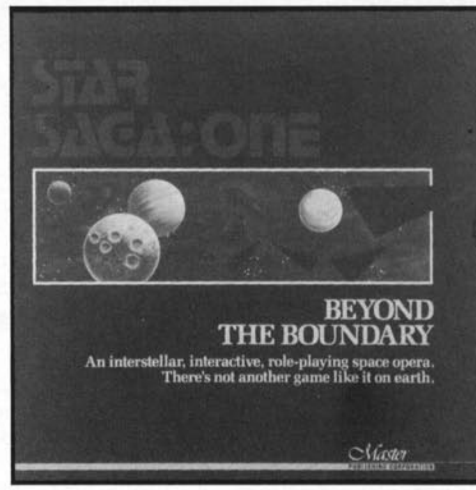
STAR SAGA:ONE: Beyond The Boundary is the brainchild of Andrew (*Wizardry*) Greenberg, Rick Dutton, Walt Freitag, and Mike Massimilla. The first science fiction, role playing, adventure game in a planned trilogy, Star Saga is a genre-buster. It can be compared to no other game on the market. The best way to describe Star Saga's playing experience is to compare it to participating in the *Foundation* series of books by Isaac Asimov. We're talking grand scale adventure here, folks.

From one to six can play the game. Each human player takes the role of one of six characters. These can be temporarily added or suspended as real-time situations require ("I can't game tonight, the horses have cholic;" "Russell! Telephone!;" and "It's two in the morning, I'm outta here!" are all situations that arose during our gaming sessions. Fortunately, the game is designed to make it convenient to simply suspend one character and continue play.).

The game is non-graphic and driven by text in booklet form. There are lots and lots of paragraphs (thirteen booklets of them to be exact). Each booklet is 48 pages long and there are 888 total entries. Actually, you don't need to read all of them to successfully complete the game, but the richness of the prose and the compelling story line will undoubtedly keep you exploring and experiencing *all* the universe has to offer.

The computer acts as a gamemaster throughout the game by moderating combat, keeping track of players' locations, handling trade transactions, and updating personal possessions. It also directs the players to the proper paragraphs to read, depending on their situation.

The game plays very smoothly and moves quickly, although it takes around 60-80 hours to complete. Each turn, a player has the option to pilot his ship through space, land and explore planets, trade cargo at planetary commodity exchanges, meet with players to exchange cargo or secret information, or interact with any non-player-characters that he may meet on various planets. The player inputs orders into the computer and is, in turn, directed to the appropriate paragraph to read. These paragraphs may lead to further options and paragraphs or may cause the player's turn to end, sometimes prematurely. (Meeting a space pirate who cleans out your cargo hold does put an unexpected crimp in that shopping spree you were going to have on Rialla!) Since there are thirteen text booklets, other players can input their orders while you're reading the results from your turn. This keeps the game moving relatively quickly, once you get used to the system. It is rare for two people to need the same booklet at the same time.

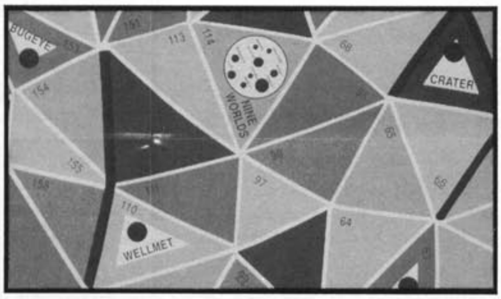


TITLE:	Star Saga: One: Beyond the Boundary
SYSTEMS:	Apple II, IIGS, and IBM
# PLAYERS:	1-6
PRICE:	$79.95
DESIGNERS:	Rick Dutton Walt Freitag Andrew Greenberg, and Mike Massimilla
PUBLISHER:	MasterPlay Tampa, FL

With all of the booklet shuffling and page turning going on, the room has the decible level of a library when the game first starts. As the players progress, though, they get negotiable commodities such as iron, computers, fuel, weapons and most importantly, information. This is when the interactivity of the game really comes into its own. Each character starts the game with a set of goals to accomplish. This usually sends everyone out into the void in different directions seeking their own separate destinies. As they explore and gain information, there is a need to trade and interact with the other players. The initial competition between the characters eventually gives way to a mutual cooperation. It's a big universe out there and it's tough to tackle it alone. However, in spite of the need for cooperation, there does seem to be a place in this game for a personal grudge, or two.

In addition to the exploration aspects of *Star Saga* there is an economic subgame that runs through the main plot. Each player starts the game with three of his ten cargo bays filled with goodies. It is up to him to determine what and when to trade. Most of the planets to be discovered will

trade their products for items they can't naturally produce. Sometimes, they'll trade three for one (if *you've* got what *they* need). Knowing what planetary exchanges offer, and what they need, is one of the most valuable pieces of information in the game. When you start the game your ship is basically the stripped down, economy model. Your personal armor and weapons consist of clothes and hands. So to emulate the bug-busting marines in the movie *Aliens* you'll need to upgrade just a bit. Fortunately, there are several space docks and weapons emporiums located in the galactic fringe.



Of course, finding them is another matter. Consequently, the early portion of the game finds everyone crisscrossing their way through space and cashing in on whatever little milkrun they've been able to set up. Eventually, as their needs and shopping lists expand, the trading routes are also enlarged and inter-player trading begins to come into the picture. Information now begins to become a valuable trading commodity. Eventually, with the right knowledge, and a little luck, (avoiding Silverbeard, the pirate), you can end up with a pretty hot ship. Drone trading ships are really handy little items to have. They can travel instantaneously to any part of the galactic fringe, and handle most trading transactions, leaving you free to carry on with whatever business you're about. At the end of your turn, the drone ship returns with your cargo, ready for next turn's trading orders. Drone ships come in three, four and five bay models, so you can increase your cargo handling capacity by fifty per cent. Also, if your ship is attacked by pirates, anything on your drone is non-piratable. So you've got your own untouchable stash! Everybody should have one of these little babies, they're invaluable!

The combat subgame is handled completely by the computer. It determines the combat situations you encounter and picks the weapons and armor you will use. There really is no tactical ability in the game, but within the combat area, there is plenty of room for maneuver. There are six categories in both personal and ship-to-ship weaponry: three in attack (contact, projectile, and special); and three in defense (armor, mobility, and special). The computer determines the best ability you have in each category (this will change depending on the opponent) and compares it to your opponent's best abilities. This is translated into a numerical score for both offense and defense. A total score of one hundred is needed for success when attacking or defending, so it is possible to successfully defend against an opponent's attack, yet fail to press your own attack home. This can result in no harm to you, but an equally undaunted foe. So, whenever possible, upgrade your combat capabilities. The combat sequences seemed to bother some of our more bloodthirsty players slightly, (our *Traveller* role-playing group tends to lean more towards *Aliens* than *Starman*) but the approach to combat integrated nicely with the rest of the game. It would have been nice to have been able to choose some of the combat options ourselves, though.

I don't want to go into anymore detail on the game because part of the magic of *Star Saga* is the sense of wonder that unfolds as you play. The prose is as well-written as anything you'll find in the science fiction section of your local bookstore and the story line is tight and well-plotted. Each player is free to do anything he wants all through the game, yet behind it all is a gently guiding hand that makes sure everyone gets where they should eventually go *["There's a divinity that shapes our ends, Rough-hew them how we will." Hamlet- (Act V, scene ii)]*.

Once the game is finished, the players can go back and explore places they didn't have time to visit initially. It is also possible to replay the game as a different character, since each character has a different set of goals in the game and will undoubtedly experience different adventures along the way. I've played the game completely through twice and will probably run through once more before the sequel comes out. Unfortunately, that won't be until next year. Waiting will be very difficult.

Star Saga:One Beyond The Boundary is probably the most unique and well-written role-playing experience yet to appear in a computer game. It will also stand up to any human-gamemastered role-playing game on the market today. The people at **Masterplay** have expanded the state-of-the-art in computer storytelling to new extremes with this product. Our entire play group was absolutely blown away by it. It is humorous, challenging, frustrating, exciting, and addictive. I can best sum it up by describing the end of our first night's session with the game.

Eyes glazed, Johnny Wilson looked at his watch in disbelief.

"Biff, it's two in the morning!"

"Oh no, it can't be," I replied. "I've got to go feed my animals."

"My wife's gonna kill me," whined Johnny, "I was supposed to help the kids with their homework!"

I looked back at the computer screen. Johnny looked at the booklet in his hand.

I looked again at Johnny, and he looked up at me. We both looked at the screen.

"Just a couple more turns and then we'll go," I hesitantly ventured.

"Move over," Johnny happily replied, "I need to explore that subterranean passageway on Fiara."

"No, you fink! I haven't been there yet," I responded.

My protestations were drowned out by his cackles as his fingers punched the computer. Anxiously awaiting my next turn at the keyboard, I watched the clock tick towards three A.M.

Tobruk: The Clash of Armour

(Continued from page 34)

In short, Tobruk recreates the Gazala Campaign, but without the stress or alternate strategies available to either side.

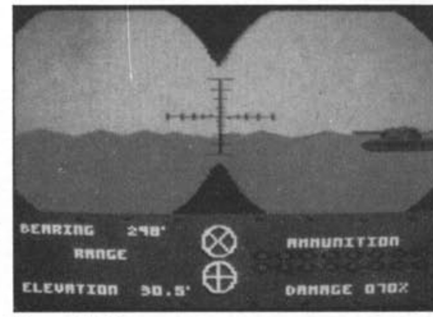
When combat is initiated, one may choose to participate on an individual vehicle level. Enemy targets appear as vehicles or fortifications. One's tank may close with the enemy, using fire and maneuver. However, eventually, one's tank will be destroyed; there is only so much that a single vehicle can do in a maelstrom of combat.

That is the deficiency of the arcade option. No real player gratification is achievable. While **Datasoft** has assured this reviewer that the arcade results figure into the overall resolution of the battle, it is obscured from the user, thereby rendering the arcade option to a little-used variation.

Conclusions

Tobruk is an introductory-level game. It accomplishes what it sets out to do, but without any real *elan* or *joie de vivre*. The use of engineer assets is commendable, but their effect appears minimal.

Tobruk has strong competitors in the marketplace. *Decision in the Desert* covers the same situation and offers an additional four scenarios, plus one can play solitaire as either side and switch from side to side in mid-game. **Game Designers Workshop**'s *Rommel: Battles For Tobruk* is based on the same campaign and offers an extremely detailed simulation, albeit with crude graphic portrayal. *Rommel at Gazala* from **Simulations Canada** offers a command perspective from either side *sans* graphics and **Strategic Studies Group** has recently released *Rommel: Battles for North Africa* which utilizes the versatile *Battlefront* system for the same subject. With so many choices, it will depend on whether the consumer is looking for a wargame with arcade elements thrown in, a carefully researched series of desert scenarios, a command perspective, or detailed simulation.



Simulations should break new ground or cover old ground in new and/or alternative conceptualizations. While Tobruk has an interesting operational interface, it is not groundbreaking in either of the above senses.

Over The River

(Continued from page 18)

each other and whomever we could talk to in local stores. It was not a good way to keep a finger on the pulse of the market.

Senior executives made periodic forays to check on our progress, wandering from cubicle to cubicle to look at games. Some were pleasant and made reasonable comments. Others were petty and dictatorial ("That background ought to be blue. Change it."). In the end the dictator types had less impact than the others, since they never played the games anyway and thus, had no idea whether their orders had been carried out. Nevertheless, I spent a great deal of time talking my best designers out of quitting after being the targets of such visits.

The cartridge era had four distinct periods, each with its implications for game designers. The first period, from 1978-1981, was the time of the Obvious Design of the Obvious Product. The proper route for a design was a straight one: show the action, tally the score. Sports games were the biggest sellers, largely because buyers knew what they were getting before they opened the package.

Game designers of the time worked for big companies (**Atari, Mattel**), drew average programmer salaries (but not royalties), and didn't have their names on the products. Management regarded their programming skills as the source of their value and game design was often snorted at as an illusory talent: "Anybody coulda made that baseball game, but I was the one who said we *oughta* do it."

The second era, which ran from 1981-82, centered on the conversion of the latest coin-op hits to the home machines. The speed of development now became absolutely critical, so a game would be ready for the home while it was still hot in the arcades.

The most visible symptom of that rush was the VCS version of *Pac-Man*, a cartridge awaited with such passion and rushed to market so hurriedly that over 1,000,000 copies were sold in the first few months of its life. Unfortunately, the game was released before its time and featured ghosts and a Pac Man that flickered irritatingly and game play that didn't feel balanced. The game's sales ground to a halt as its bad reputation spread by word of mouth, and Atari had to absorb huge losses on returns. Score one for quality.

Ironically, it was during the third era, a brief time in 1982-83, that game designers finally began to get some of their just rewards. There is a story (perhaps apocryphal) that Pac-Man was finished at all only because of a special mid-project "arrangement" for programmer royalties. The success of **Activision** after being founded by four former Atari game designers (including Alan Miller and Bob Whitehead, who later left to found **Accolade**) led Atari, Mattel and Coleco to take a second look at how they handled their creative staffs.

Royalties of the time were in most cases minuscule, but they nonetheless began being paid. Names of designers began to appear in small print on the backs of packages and in manuals. In fact, the companies began working overtime to recruit the best ones away from their competitors.

Nevertheless, before the industry could really mature, new voices sounded the coming in 1983-84 of the fourth era—and the cartridges' death knell. Dazzled by the success of **Atari, Mattel, Coleco** and **Activision**, hordes of imitators jumped into the market. **Quaker Oats** even founded a video game subsidiary! In late 1982, the number of cartridges manufactured by all these companies far outstripped the demand. Many of the games were absolutely awful, but retailers, riding a 3-year sales burst, kept ordering everything anyway.

Christmas, 1982 was a disappointment and by early 1983, the game-playing public had made the choices which the manufacturers had refused to make. Many of the games still sat on store shelves. Returns started rolling back in to the publishers. Several companies went under rapidly: **Games by Apollo, Fox Videogames, U.S. Games** and others.

Further, once they were bankrupt, they could no longer take returns from the stores. Retailers cut their losses by cutting their prices and the $4.95 specials we still see today appeared in a marketplace where normal prices had averaged $35. Surviving publishers with large inventories started selling better games at bargain prices to cut their losses. The $35 carts looked overpriced by comparison, and even the best games' sales slowed to a crawl as the $5 specials swallowed all remaining demand. More bankruptcies followed, and Atari, Mattel and Coleco disbanded their game design staffs.

The first Cartridge Wars were over.

(I'm sure you've noticed that I've made no reference to the Nintendo craze that has repeated the Atari and Mattel Phenomenon of 8 years ago. That's because for American game designers the Nintendo is a non-event: virtually all the work to date has been done in Japan. Only the future will tell if the design process ever crosses the Pacific as efficiently as the container ships and the letters of credit now do.)

How Deep are the Woods?

While the big companies publishing Coin-Op Conversions and sports games were dominating the cartridge world, small companies like **Sirius, Broderbund, Infocom, Automated Simulations, SSI, On-Line Systems** and others were quietly building the home computer game market.

Instead of large in-house staffs, these companies usually combined a few game designers who were employees (often the founders themselves) with a group of external programmers. These independent designers had the same relationship with the game companies that book authors have with traditional publishers: they submitted their games for consideration, the publisher chose the good ones, and the authors were paid a royalty.

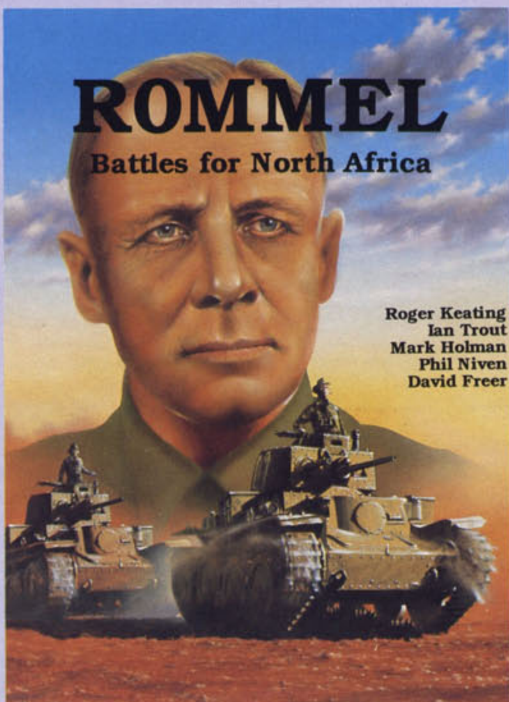
Authors' names appeared prominently on these game packages long before the practice infiltrated the cartridge world. Names of that early era like Bill Budge (*Raster Blaster*), Dan Bunten (*Computer Quarterback*), Chris Crawford (*Eastern Front 1941*), Jon Freeman (*Temple of Apshai*), Dan Gorlin (*Choplifter*) and Doug Smith (*Lode Runner*) became familiar to gamers and were associated with quality products. Many of those same designers continue as leaders of our industry today.

From 1978-82 most of the notoriety outside the computer game world went to the cartridge games. Yet, today's industry is directly based on the structure that was evolving in the disk-based world at the same time, the world which *Computer Gaming World* chose to cover when it first appeared in 1981.

The small publishers succeeded where Atari, Mattel and Coleco had failed, and a key element in that success was, and is, their view of *"Computer Game Designers" as special individuals with unique talents who are worthy of all our respect.* I can think of no more appropriate conclusion to reach in an article to honor the fiftieth issue of *Computer Gaming World.*

Strategic Studies Group Presents

The Legend of the Desert Fox



By January 1941, the War in North Africa was going very badly for the Axis powers. The Italian army had been routed out of Egypt and almost out of Libya.

A small German force was scraped together to try and stem the tide. Command of this force was given to General Irwin Rommel. . . and for the next two years, outnumbered and poorly supplied, the Desert Fox out-witted and out-generalled all of his foes.

ROMMEL recreates his greatest victories as well as other battles from the North African Theatre. You can command either Axis or Allied forces against human or computer opponents in the battles of. . .

Syria Sidi Rezegh Cauldron
Alem el Halfa Malta Kasserine
Maknassy Tebourga Gap

The ***Battlefront Game System*** mechanics are so simple to use, you will be issuing orders like a veteran within ten minutes of assuming command.

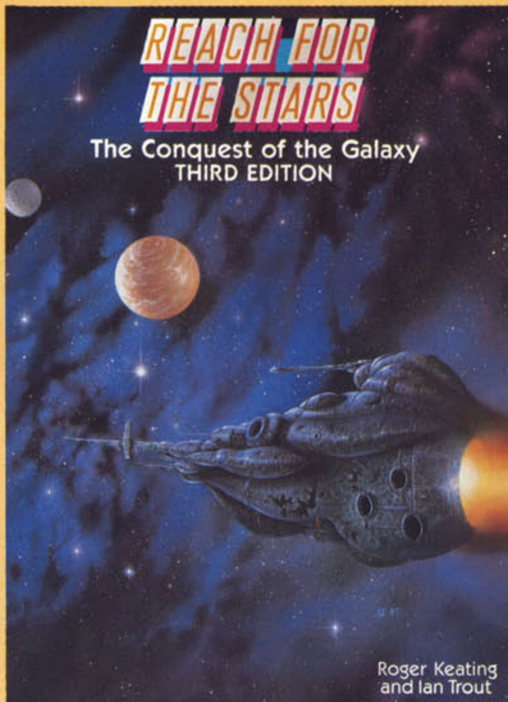
You'll have complete control over the computer battlefield when you use the comprehensive wargame construction set, **WARPLAN™**, and our unique graphics editor, **WARPAINT™**.

WARPLAN™ lets you construct original battles of your own design as well as creating endless variations to the historical scenarios.

WARPAINT™ gives you complete graphic control. Shapes and colors can be changed at will to produce your own special effects.

Available now for Apple II Family and C64/128 computers.
Price $40.00.

Conquer Your Galaxy



Reach for the Stars is Strategic Studies Group's all-time classic game of space exploration and conquest. The third edition contains two great games in one; the original ***Reach for the Stars*** and an entirely new scenario, with lots of options for advanced play.

Whichever game you choose to play, you're in for a tough time. It's a four-cornered contest for domination of the galaxy and there's only one winner. The computer plays all places not taken by humans and it never gives anyone an even break.

To win a game of ***Reach for the Stars*** you must have explored all of the galaxy and colonized the choicest portions. You will have expanded your industry, engaged in frantic R&D, and produced a large space navy. This will have been employed in settling territorial disputes with your neighbours. As always, the person with the biggest navy gets to adjust the border.

It's not as easy as it sounds. Do the wrong thing and it could be three against one, especially if you're playing against Keating's Enhanced Veteran computer players. They just don't like you to start with, and can get really annoyed if you mess with them. That's why there are Beginner and Experienced players on which to first practice your galactic domination skills.

Whatever your qualifications as a space tyrant, ***Reach for the Stars*** is guarantied to be totally addictive. . .

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Video Gaming World

By Arnie Katz, Bill Kunkel and Joyce Worley

Video Gaming World's Newswire

-Compiled by Joyce Worley

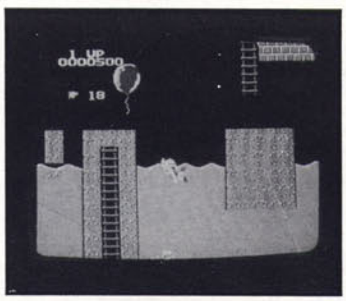
The glamor of soaring sales, expected to hit $1.25 billion in '88, is the name of the game. Videogame experts estimate a 40% increase in hardware and software sales for the current year. **Nintendo** was the clear winner in 1987, taking an estimated 65% share of market in hardware sales. **Atari**'s share of the hardware market is estimated at 24%, **Sega** at 8%, and other companies at 3%. . . . **Atari** has scheduled over 19 new games for the XE system this year, most of which are high-quality computer game conversions licensed from their original publishers. Among them is the award-winner, *Into the Eagles Nest,* a classic high-action excursion into Hitler's stronghold . . . **Camerica**'s wireless, remote control, infrared-system *Freedom Stick* lets the player move 20 feet away from the screen, with either automatic rapid fire or manual action. The accessory is compatible with **Nintendo, Sega, Atari,** and **Commodore**. . . . Who ya' gonna' call? *Ghostbusters*, of course, coming this Autumn for NES from **Activision**. . . . **LJN Toys** crossed an invisible line in bad taste with their latest NES game, *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, which actually casts the gamer as Freddy Kruger and sends him out to kill teenagers. Not nice! *Friday the 13th* takes a more heroic, if more scary, stance and sends the gamer on a search for Jason and his Zombies. . . . *The Battlefields of Napoleon* (**Broderbund**) lets NESers command the troops through simulations of eight of Napoleon's campaigns. Designed by the same crew that produced the best-selling *Deadly Towers* . . . **SNK Corporation** goes to war in *Iron Tank: The Invasion of Normandy*, for NESers who have always wanted to spearhead an assault against German headquarters. . . . Video games in big



Camerica's Freedom Stick



LJN Toys' Nightmare on Elm St.



TITLE:	Super Pitfall
SYSTEM:	Nintendo
# PLAYERS:	1-2
PRICE:	$35.00-$40.00
DESIGNER:	Pony, Inc. (from David Crane's original)
PUBLISHER:	Activision



TITLE:	Jaws
SYSTEM:	Nintendo
# PLAYERS:	1
PRICE:	$35.00-$40.00
PUBLISHER:	LJN Toys, Ltd.

biz: **Acclaim Entertainment** has merged with **Gamma Capital Corporation**, making it a public corporation. . . . **CAPCOM USA** will bring *Willow* home from the movies, for the NES, later this year. . . . *The Magic of Scheherazade* (**Culture Brain**) is an Arabian Nights fantasy, with magic, battlefields, flying carpets, and a variety of tools and weapons. It should be available in January, 1989. . . . NESers control style and direction of serves, rushing the net, or playing the backcourt in *Racket Attack* (**Jaleco**. Specially marked sweepstakes packages give buyers a chance to win tennis equipment and lessons. . . . **Sega** is giving players a look at their new games. The *Sega Games Preview* VHS video tape ($7) shows sample levels of ten games. . . . The hands across the ocean most likely have joysticks in them. Palan Electronics of London, England sold over 180,000 cartridges for **Atari 2600** in 1987 and expects the total to reach one half million pieces for this year. About 50% of their sales go to Europe and the rest are for English joystick jockeys. 75% of the **Palan** products are **Activision** titles, but the company should have ten original 16K Double Chip games ready for the holiday buying season. Top titles last year were: *Space Shuttle, Pitfall, Hero,* and *Decathlon*. This year should include: *Ghostbusters, Pitfall II,* and *River Raid*. Lou Fine, Managing Director of **Palan**, estimates that there are 7 million Atari 2600 units worldwide and of these, 1.5 million are in England. The company is booming and, in fact, has openings for Atari 2600 programmers. If you think you have the Right Stuff, write to Lou at: Palan Electronics, Ltd., Prestwich House, Brunswick Industrial Park, Brunswick Way, London N11 1HX, England, and tell him we sent you.

Now, *here's* an original idea: a jumping/climbing/shooting game for the **Nintendo Entertainment System**!

When a consumer buys the NES, he gets a free copy of *Super Mario Bros.* packed inside. Video game designers seem to believe, however, that the user will thereafter be looking for endless rehashes of that admittedly excellent game. Within the past year, we've seen such thinly-veiled SMB clones as *Ghosts 'n Goblins* (**CAPCOM**), *Kid Niki, Radical Ninja* and *Karnov* (**Data East**). Now that the **Nintendo** game manufacturing community has turned corporate licensing eyes on the world of old video and computer games, guess which titles they find most appealing? Why, jumping/climbing/shooting games, of course!

Super Pitfall is a compendium of images and characters taken from the two *Pitfall* games designed by David Crane for the old Atari 2600. Shamefully, Crane is not even mentioned anywhere in the documentation. These characters and images were transformed by **Pony, Inc.** into a SMB rehash that most NES users will be able to play in their sleep. Certainly, there is nothing in the game itself to keep them awake.

Super Pitfall centers around adventurer Pitfall Harry and the search for a priceless diamond that disappeared along with his daughter (Rhonda) and Quickclaw the cowardly lion (How many of you remember that *Pitfall* enjoyed a deservedly short life as an animated TV series?). The trio turned up missing just before the game commences.

What Super Pitfall is *really* about, of course, is jumping/climbing/shooting. Wherever reality and the established SMB play system come into conflict, hackney triumphs. For example, objects such as guns, medicine and keys periodically appear on the playfield, but since the designers want Pitfall Harry to jump whenever possible, the objects are suspended in mid-air, rather than located on the ground.

Super Pitfall employs the same macro-style side view as the original Pitfall games. Harry and

his adversaries (snakes, scorpions, cavemen, etc.) are viewed in side perspective, but more than one level is visible on screen simultaneously. While Harry explores the surface, for example, subterranean levels can be seen underneath him, providing a tantalizing look at treasures and dangers to come.

Pony visually reshaped the characters to look like the short, squat beings seen in other SMB clones. These characters move in a slow-motion, floating style that is at unsatisfying odds with the action game format.

If you simply must have another jumping/climbing/shooting game for your NES, Super Pitfall is a cute enough entry. It employs the Pitfall characters in an appealing new scenario with play mechanics that Nintendo gamers will find comfortable, if somewhat familiar.

—Bill Kunkel

And now, for something *completely* different . . .

LJN Toys, a company previously best known for its WWF Wrestling dolls, burst upon the videogame software scene with one of the most original, entertaining programs in the NES universe. *Jaws* is a creative, multi-phase action adventure in which the player battles **Universal Pictures**' giant shark and a whole cornucopia of his minions.

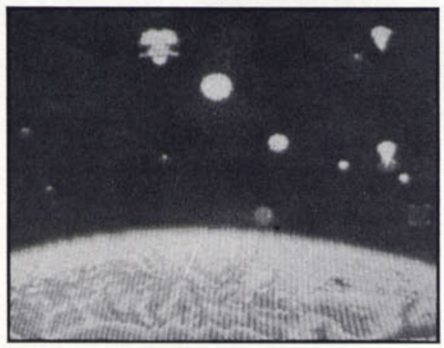
Jaws begins with the Map Screen, rendered in an attractive angled overhead perspective rather than the flat 2-D most maps display. This chart fills several screens and the scrolling is remarkably smooth.

The player's ship is docked safely at a port until it's moved to sea via the directional control pad. The player continues to sail until the ship strikes something. This might be Jaws himself, represented on the Map Screen by his trademark dorsal fin when he is close to the player's ship or some other form of undersea life too small to visually register on the map at all. A transmitter allows the player to keep track of Jaws' position sonically.

The game advances to the Side View scenario, a vertically-scrolling contest in which the player shoots at a variety of targets from jellyfish and rays to small sharks and even Big Bruce himself. When hit, the rays and jellyfish sometimes transform into bonus objects to be collected by the diver to increase his energy level, enhance his speed, or acquire points. These points can be used at the two other available ports to pick up a tracking transmitter or increase energy level.

The higher the diver's energy level, the more lethal his blasts, but it takes a pretty heavy energy level to even put a dent in the big guy.

Players who triumph on the Side Screen scenario are periodically granted a bonus screen in which they drop bombs on scampering jellyfish from an airplane that zips back and forth across the top of the screen.



Once the player sufficiently builds his own power and depletes Jaws' strength level (displayed at the bottom of the screen), the game moves to the Final Scene. This gives the player a first-person view from the front of his boat. The shark-hunter must ram into Jaws with the boat's prow to finish him off.

Jaws is rich in the small details that make a game playable over long periods of time. The farther one sails from the coast, for example, the deeper the water. Take my word for it, you do not want to confront Big Bruce in the shallows!

The graphics, animations and game play in Jaws are all first rate. If this is any indication of what LJN can produce in the videogame theater, they should forget about the wrestling dolls and buckle down to full-time game design immediately!

—Bill Kunkel

Once again, **Sega** offers home gamers an opportunity to stave off nuclear devastation. *Global Defense* is essentially a 2-D version of Sega's 3-D hit, *Missile Defense*. The player again represents mankind's last hope of averting a global holocaust.

The game is divided into offensive and defensive halves. In fact, both phases feature offense and defense in that the player must attempt to obliterate incoming missiles launched "from secret bases located all over the galaxy." This must be coupled with his other duty, to protect the "Global Defense Satellite," the weapon with which the player launches his anti-missile assault.

In the offensive phase, the GDS is seen from a side view (as are missiles and other projectiles), whereas the Earth is viewed from the upper edges of the atmosphere. The player manipulates the GDS with the Sega controller while passing high above the planet. One of the action buttons provides direct guidance of the GDS and the second button fires the satellite's laser cannon which is aimed via an onscreen cursor.

TITLE:	Global Defense
SYSTEM:	Sega
# PLAYERS:	1-2 Players
PRICE:	$40.00
PUBLISHER:	Sega

In addition to the incoming missiles, the GDS must also deal with land bases (which launch surface-to-air weapons), killer satellites, "crab ships," and attack probes. Each time a missile or other incoming weapon gets past the GDS, a unit on the player's "Damage Meter" lights up. Direct hits obliterate the GDS.

If the GDS successfully negotiates its journey, a space shuttle appears, scoops it up, and carries it to the Defensive phase, which is sort of a cross between *Missile Command* **(Atari)** and *Space Invaders* **(Taito)**. From far out in space (so far that the curve of the planet is clearly visible at the base of the screen), the missiles which slipped by during the first phase now appear in the far distance. The projectiles pop over the edge of the earth, continue toward the top of the screen, then arc slowly downscreen (following the curvature of the planet) to move directly toward the GDS and the player. Once the missiles attain proximity to the GDS, they hover briefly before floating toward the bottom of the screen and earth's helpless cities. The player, employing the onscreen cursor firing system, must destroy each and every missile. If even a single stray hits home, the game is over.

Graphics and animations are attractive and make for an exciting contest, but the mixed perspectives (combining bird's eye and side views on a single playfield) are visually disconcerting. Moreover, the direction pad controller is noticeably inferior to tracball (or even, joystick) controllers in games where the cursor must be moved rapidly around the screen.

—Bill Kunkel

The Modern Home Arcade

-by Bill Kunkel and Arnie Katz

Back in the late '70s, if you asked a home videogame designer/programmer where he got his ideas, he would probably respond: "The arcades." At least, that's what the most honest ones said. Most video games from this period were, in fact, scaled-down and thinly-veiled reproductions of classic coin-op arcade games.

The battle for the lucrative home market heated up by the end of the decade. It was no longer enough for a game to simply look like, play like, and contain most or all of the original's elements. The previous free-wheeling design style caused legal complications, while also failing to capitalize on the popularity of the play-for-pay hits. Publishers began actually buying the rights to the coin-op hits and, before long, it reached a point where there was no arcade game so worthless that someone wouldn't make an overvalued offer for its home marketing rights.

Today's home videogame market is still driven by the arcade hits, but there are some significant differences from those halcyon days. For one thing, today's coin-op hits don't have the media visibility of their precursors from the early '80s. Game like: *Space Invaders, Pacman, Defender,* and *Berserk* were media sensations whose names and graphics were universally recognized by consumers. As a result, those consumers frequently based the decision of which videogame system to purchase based on the availability of specific titles within that system's inventory.

Since none of the contemporary arcade hits command that kind of recognition, the different systems on today's market distinguish themselves in terms of their style and intended market position. **Nintendo** is the "all family" system with a

(Continued on page 47)

HARPOON

Somewhere in the desolate and freezing wastes of the North Atlantic, between Iceland and the Kola Peninsula, a Soviet battle fleet is lurking, ready to pounce on its prey.

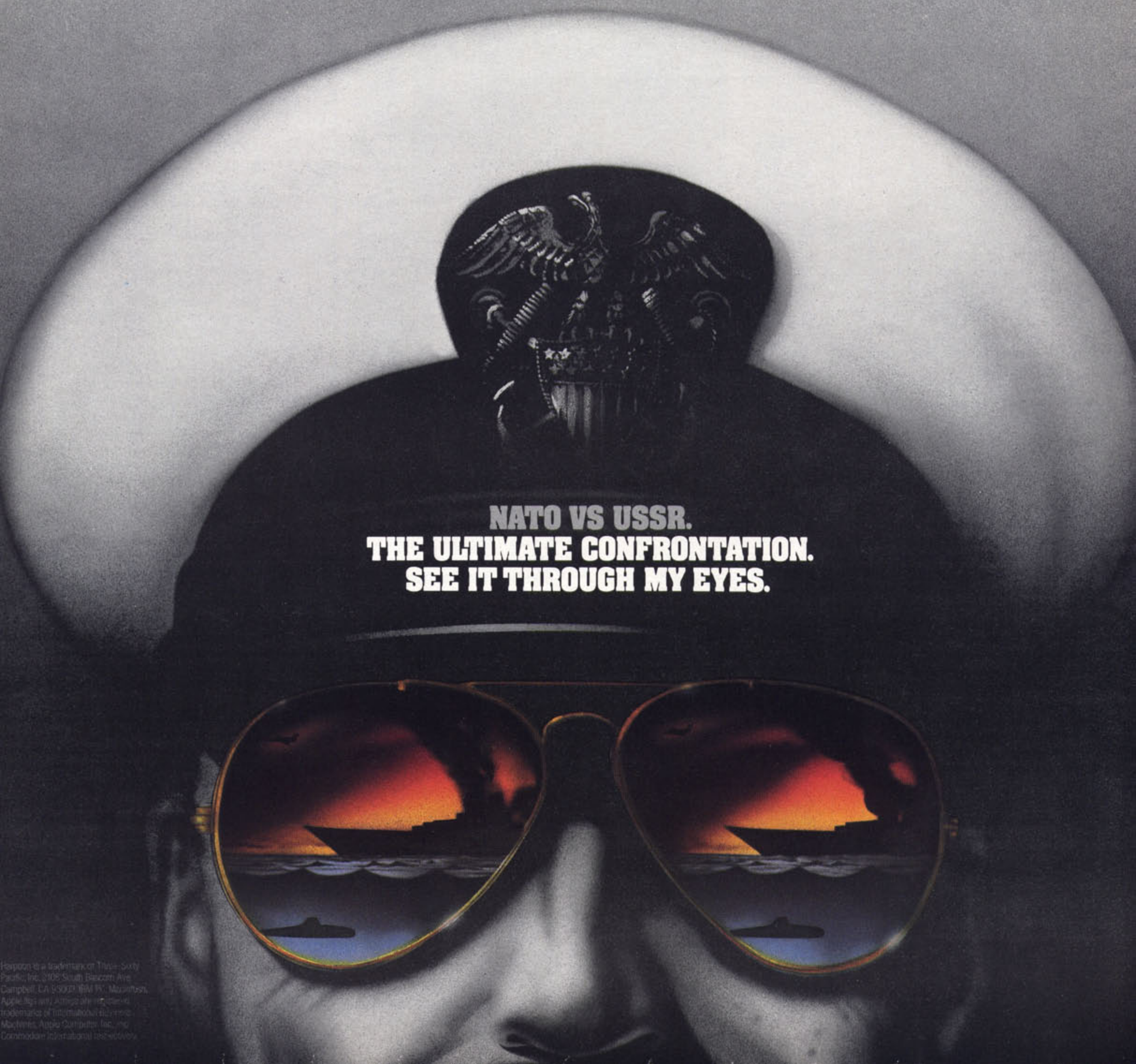
As NATO Task Force Commander you must deploy your fleet of submarines, ships, and aircraft to locate, engage and defeat the Kremlin's finest.

Produced by Larry Bond, noted co-author of "Red Storm Rising" and Naval Analyst, Harpoon portrays the superpower's final confrontation. Now it's up to you.

With graphics that make everything else look like finger painting, and an arsenal of weaponry that comes up to your armpits, Harpoon's non-stop action, relentless intensity and chilling responsibility will leave you gasping. It's more than a mere game—it's a current event!

Available now for PC/compatibles. Coming for Macintosh, Apple IIGS and Amiga. Contact your software retailer or Three-Sixty, 408/879-9144.

THREE-SIXTY



(Continued from page 45)

vast library reflecting the tastes of both youngsters (lots of jumping and climbing games with cartoon-like graphics) and adults (sports titles and adventure games). **Sega**, on the other hand, is the "cool" system with the "hot" graphics, appealing largely to teenagers and other arcade gunslingers. It offers sizzling visuals designed more for realism than cuteness, plus an incredible 3-D system.

Atari, the only old-timer in the current videogame picture, seems to be positioning itself as the "classics" company. The lineup for its 7800 videogame system emphasizes high quality versions of early '80s arcade classics (*Joust, Asteroids, Pole Position,* etc.), while the XE catalog consists mostly of home computer hits from the same period (*Archon, Lode Runner, David's Midnight Magic,* etc.).

The relationship between coin-ops and home video games has also changed in another way. While Atari was the only major player of the early '80s, with fingers in both the home and coin-op markets, both of today's big guns, Nintendo and Sega, are established coin-op creators with considerable credibility—and vast product catalogs—in the arcade universe.

Nintendo dominates the picture in terms of quantity. Not only do they have access to the inventory of former Nintendo hits, but through licensing deals with prolific coin-op producers like Data East and Capcom, the NES library is potentially almost unlimited.

Ghosts 'n Goblins, a recent release from Capcom, is an excellent example of what the Nintendo Entertainment System can do. The game is, essentially, a spooked-up version of *Super Mario Bros*. with more shooting. The player is cast as a brave knight whose princess is captured by a winged demon during the game's attractive animated prelude.

In order to rescue her, the player's knight must pass through a series of seven gates (a schematic map of these is displayed after each loss of a life). When the player reaches the end of each section, a key to the next gate appears. Guarding these portals are a rogues' gallery of zombies, ghosts, demons, and assorted things that go bump in the night. There is also a series of jars. It seems these demons are rather compulsive about bottling up all captives and treasures (Haven't they heard about *Tupperware*?). These urns contain new weapons, as well as bonus characters who bestow extra points when rescued.

While hardly groundbreaking, *Ghosts 'n Goblins* represents the kind of game that made Nintendo famous. Similarly, Sega's *After Burner* serves as a good example of the kind of game that system strives to offer.







After Burner is the first game that uses Sega's new 4MB technology and the enhanced graphic capabilities this added memory provides is abundantly obvious. After Burner uses the same pseudo-first person perspective as most driving games (*Pole Position, Out Run,* etc.). The player's vehicle (in this case, an F-14 Thunder Cat) appears in the center of the screen as a visible guide. In addition, The HUD (Head's Up Display) offers a small radar sight, as well as a pair of target cursors (cannon and missile sights).

The landscape moves beneath the F-14 like the surface of a rolling cylinder (one of the less pleasing visual elements), but the five different classes of enemy aircraft are rendered in remarkable detail. The action scenes, the heart of the program, look appropriately spectacular and the explosions are some of the best effects ever seen in a videogame.

The game's only real problem is the use of twin sighting cursors in addition to the player's on-screen vehicle serves as a large cursor, a visual guide to keep the player appraised of his relative position. In After Burner, the cannon sight often disappears against the large F-14 and the player is forced to fire blind.

This game doesn't offer the same kind of rich simulation experience provided by **MicroProse** or **subLogic** flight simulators, but then, those games don't have explosions like After Burner!

Old-timers who decry the over-reliance on hot graphics and the lack of old-fashioned game values can turn for solace to the Atari XE and games like *Battle-Zone*, the classic first-person tank combat contest set in the near-future.

This home version makes a half-hearted effort to duplicate the vector graphics which gave the coin-op original its distinctive, crystalline look, but this game's strength lies in a simple, but powerful play mechanic. The user is a tank command attempting to destroy an army of rebel war machines with nothing but a cannon and a crude radar display for allies.

Whatever your taste in arcade games, one thing is certain: the world of home arcading has never been richer. Home translations of arcade hits are virtually indistinguishable from the originals. What's more, these translations reach the home market much quicker than they did in the "old days" (when coin-op manufacturers were reluctant to undercut future arcade earnings). Whatever your taste in arcade games, there is a videogame system out there that's got just what you're looking for . . . and no tokens or coins are required!

—Bill Kunkel & Arnie Katz

SPECIAL REPORT: Fall Video Game Preview

Publishers strut their software at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago

-by Arnie Katz, Bill Kunkel, and Joyce Worley

Everyone agreed it couldn't happen. When the videogame bubble burst in 1983, people assumed another fad had gone bust, never to return.

The 1988 Summer Consumer Electronics Show proved that video games are back with a bang. Huge hardware and software sales gains and rosy projections for the holiday season sent optimism into the stratosphere at the convention.

The only thing stopping even faster growth is the shortage of computer chips. It may be tough to find some of the new games for the Nintendo this December. In fact, a few of the titles premiered at CES may not debut in the stores until 1989. With that small warning delivered, let's preview the cartridges everyone will be playing this winter and beyond.

Licensing Line-up

After a lapse of several years, publishers have returned to other media as a source of inspiration for new video games. More licenses are in active development right now than in the previous three years combined!

Reggie Jackson Baseball and *Walter Payton Football* (both **Sega**) are both arcade-style sports contests endorsed by these all-time greats. They combine realistic graphics with lots of player options for grandstand managers and coaches. A star of more recent vintage headlines, John Elway, has endorsed *John Elway's Quarterback* (**Tradewest**), a Nintendo gridiron cartridge.

Licensing comes to the golf links with *Lee Trevino's Fighting Golf* (**SNK Corporation of America**) for the Nintendo. This detailed simulation presents multiple views of 18 demanding holes.

Hulkamania runs wild in *Wrestlemania* (**Acclaim**). The arcade-style mat game features Hulk Hogan, Andre the Giant, Randy Savage, and other stars of the World Wrestling Federation in real-time ring action.

Notable movie-based games include *Robocop* (**Data East**) and *Platoon* (**Sunsoft**) for the Nintendo, as well as *Rambo III* for the **Sega** system. All have non-stop combat action and, in addition, Rambo III has the kind of frenetic pace which can really give the light phaser a workout.

Mindscape's first group of Nintendo releases include a game based on the Road Runner cartoons. The player helps Road Runner avoid trucks, falling rocks, cannon balls, and the tenacious clutches of Wile E. Coyote.

GameTek will have an entire Nintendo line based on well-known T.V. game shows. *Jeopardy* and *Wheel of Fortune*, both of which have all the visual frills the shows' fans expect, are now available. Coming soon are *Double Dare, Super Password, Classic Concentration, Hollywood Squares, Card Sharks,* and "junior" editions of both *Jeopardy* and *Wheel of Fortune.*

The whole family will enjoy *Monopoly* (**Sega**) based on Parker Brothers' durable money game. Animated tokens and an unusual pseudo-3-D perspective pump fresh life into this classic.

Airwolf (**Acclaim**), based on the television series, is a helicopter flight simulation for the Nintendo system. The player pilots the super-chopper on a mission to rescue hostages.

Leaping from the pages of their "ground level" comic book to the video gaming screen are *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (**Ultra**). The solitaire gamer fights "Foot" Clan Ninjitsu warriors in this martial arts epic.

Coin-Ops Come Home

During the videogame lull, 1984-1986, few arcade games made a dent in the home market. The typical computer gamer is about two decades older than the average arcader, so computer entertainment software stresses relatively complex and cerebral simulations.

The videogame and coin-op audiences, however, overlap extensively. As a result, quite a few hit quarter-snatchers will make their debut for home systems before the end of the year.

Promising a monstrously good time is *Rampage* (**Data East**) for the Nintendo. Based on the **Bally Midway** coin-op, Rampage casts the player as a creature on the loose with 128 screens awaiting destruction. Also from Data East is *Cobra Command*, an enhanced version of the 1985 helicopter rescue game.

Paperboy (**Mindscape**), for the Nintendo, is another coin-op classic long overdue for a home version. Bizarre obstacles menace the heroic paperboy as he makes his daily delivery.

Tensen is releasing one of the few arcade games which lets players cooperate against a common enemy in the Nintendo version of *Gauntlet*.

Further, **Sega** plans to turn several of its recent arcade hits into video games. *Shinobi*, *Thunderblade*, and *Double Dragon* will all be in stores for holiday gift-giving. **Tradewest** will issue a Nintendo edition of *Double Dragon*.

Born on the Computer

Ultima (**FCI**) brings a colorful, if slightly streamlined, version of the best-selling *Ultima III* computer adventure to the Nintendo. The player directs a four-character party against the villainy of Exodus.

Shanghai (**Sega**) is certainly the most unexpected videogame of the year. Match pairs of delicately colored tiles in this cerebral strategy contest which seems light years away from blowing up aliens.

Spy vs. Spy on the same system, mixes two hot trends: It was originally a computer game and is, in turn, based on the comic strip from *Mad* magazine. One of two players search for secret plans while harassing the other agent with traps.

California Games, **Epyx**'s computer hit, is going the videogame route. The multi-event action-sports title will be published by **Milton Bradley** for the Nintendo and by Sega for its own system. Milton Bradley also plans to release another Epyx program, *World Games* for the Nintendo.

Original Designs

Sega will enter the role-playing arena with *Phantasy Star*, its first 4 MB cartridge. The player saves the Algol system in a game which features both space travel and multi-level three-dimensional dungeon.

An adventure with a lighter touch is *Kid Kool* (**Vic Tokai**) for the Nintendo. The hero of this arcade-style quest has three days to find the nine wonder herbs to save King Voldam.

For sophisticated Nintendo players, **Jaleco** offers *Robowarrior*. Its 27 stages of play are crammed with action, but the large number of weapons, enemies, and puzzle rooms provide plenty of opportunity to exercise the gray matter.

720° from **Mindscape** is a cross between a skateboarding sports cartridge and an adventure. Waiting to test your abilities are the local hotshots of Skate City.

The Round-up

Even this lengthy survey can't cover all the new titles for the Nintendo and Sega, despite this month's expanded *Video Gaming World*. The safest prediction is that the biggest problem for video gamers is likely to be how to make the budget stretch far enough to get all the hot cartridges.

TAKING A PEEK

(Continued from page 10)

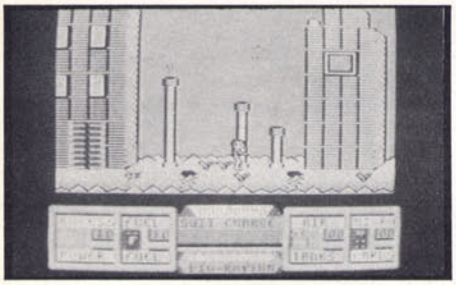
in the grid before proceeding to the next one. Nevertheless, there are enemies which are designed to erase the player's lines and enemies which "kill" the player's icon with a mere touch. These enemies offer enough of a challenge so that even the programmers claim not to have been able to advance beyond the 12th level in this 50 level game. Amiga ($29.95). Circle Reader Service Card #9.

Koei Corporation
20000 Mariner Avenue #100
Torrance, CA 90503

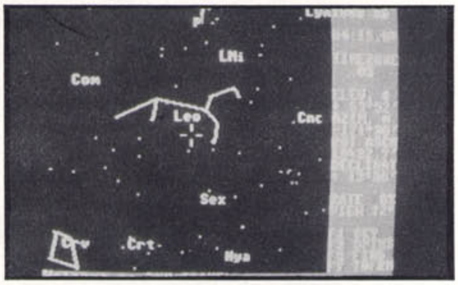
NOBUNAGA'S AMBITION: Another beautifully crafted game from the makers of "Romance of the Three Kingdoms" (CGW #49, p. 39), this product offers 1-8 players the opportunity for military, economic, and diplomatic conquest in 16th Century Japan. Although the game mechanics and user interface is simple, players will want to keep their von Clausewitz "On War" and Sun Tzu's "The Art of War" beside them in order to do well in this fascinating wargame. IBM ($59.95). Circle Reader Service Card #10.

Mastertronic
711 W. 17th Street #G9
Costa Mesa, CA 92627

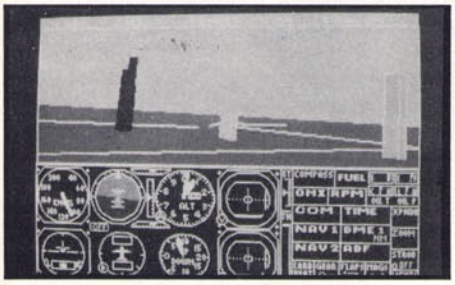
DEMON'S FORGE: A graphic adventure in the traditional sense of parser-driven, illustrated stories, this product presents the saga of a renowned gladiator struggling for his life. Sentenced to death, the gladiator has one chance for survival. He must enter, navigate, and safely exit "The Demon's Forge," that infamous dungeon exit from whence no hero hath escaped in centuries. Apple/IBM flippie in 5.25" ($9.99), IBM in 3.5" ($12.99), both ($14.99). Circle Reader Service Card #11.



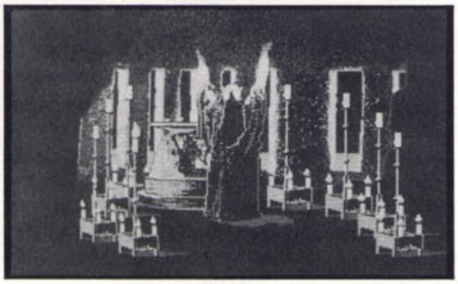
Main Frame



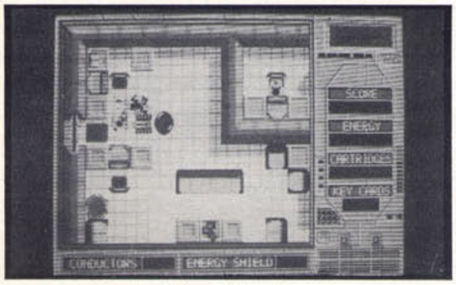
Sky Travel



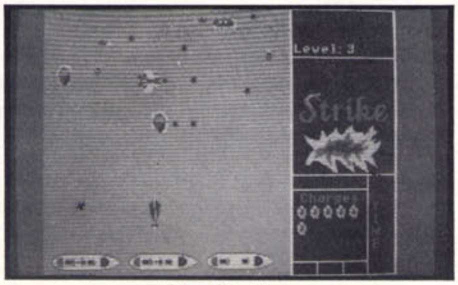
Flight Simulator III



Willow



Alien Mind



Sea Strike

KNIGHT GAMES: Remember the tournaments in "Ivanhoe" and "Robin Hood?" This game offers many of the same individual combat competitions: archery, axe duels, ball and chain flailing (morningstar combat?), crossbow competition, pikestaff contests, quarterstaff bashing, and sword fighting. C-64/128 ($9.99). Circle Reader Service Card #12.

NINJA MISSION: The screens look like several other martial arts games, but there is a plot line to this action adventure. The player's ninja must enter the evil tyrant Akuma's infamous fortress of death and retrieve the invaluable "Shichi Nin No Kami," seven jade idols with mystical powers which are vital to the survival of a defenseless village. Naturally, the seven jade idols are scattered throughout the floors (levels) of the fortress. Amiga ($19.99), as "Ninja" for Atari 8-bit, C-64/128, IBM in 5.25" ($9.99), IBM in 3.5" ($12.99). Circle Reader Service Card #13.

microillusions
17408 Chatsworth St.
Granada Hills, CA 91344

MAIN FRAME: The fiction behind this game sounds like a tired sci-fi potboiler. A massive computing system begins to function independently and a hostile AI is set loose upon civilization. Obviously, the player is intended to stop this nefarious and increasingly homicidal matrix. There are plenty of different screens and arcade sequences for the character to conquer, however. In the air, on the land, and under the sea, those who want more action than story line will like this adventure. C-64/128 ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #14.

SKY TRAVEL: While it is not a game, this delightful astronomy/planetarium program is certainly well-conceived and documented. The program functions in conjunction with the manual to offer several planned planetarium-type experiences, but also offers enough "constructability" to create one's own planetarium shows. Apple IIGS ($52.95), C-64/128 ($49.95). Circle Reader Service Card #15.

Microsoft Corporation
16011 NE 36th Way
Box 97017
Redmond, WA 98073

FLIGHT SIMULATOR III: The newest version of the famous flight simulation program is even better than its predecessors. The graphics on the IBM version (in

(Continued on page 53)

Questron II

(Continued from page 9)

secret lair at the bottom. This lair (as in Questron) is actually a castle level, chock full of guards. In addition, the moment you set foot on this level, Mantor will start hitting you with mind zaps every move you make. Therefore, your time here is limited. You must fight through the guards and find the room where the book is being prepared as quickly as possible, before you run out of hitpoints (and no, you can't kill Mantor this time around).

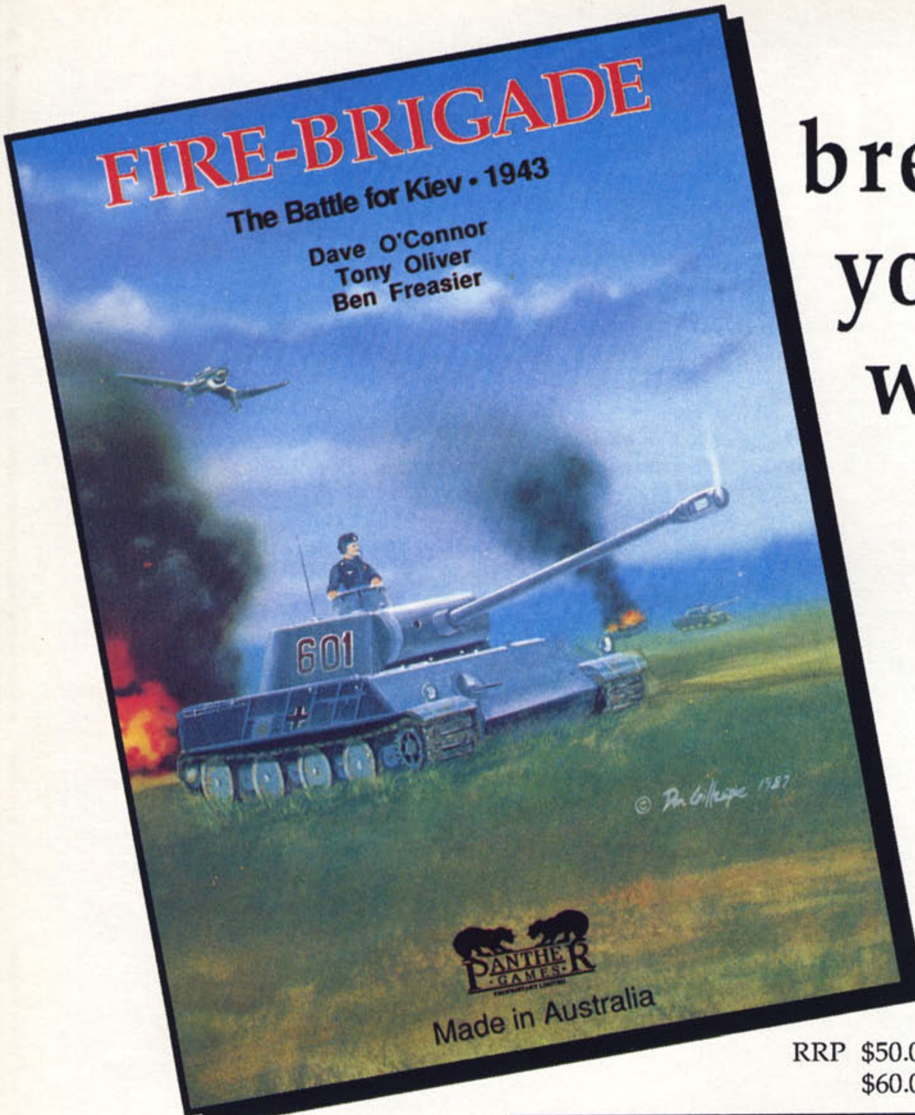
This is where those breads of life are so important (you *have* been saving them up, I hope). Not only do they restore lost points, they actually increase points. It is, therefore, possible (with enough of them) to have thousands of hit points, which you are certainly going to need on Mantor's level. Eat all your breads before going down to the last level (you won't have time once you're there!).

The ending (when the book is destroyed) is nowhere near as grand as that of Questron. In fact, it's pretty tame by comparison, since it is mostly text with a few graphics thrown in, making the end "reward" barely adequate to the task accomplished.

Aside from going into tombs and dungeons there is little to do in the game except fight monsters (and castle guards) to accumulate gold, and trek around the towns looking for better weapons and armor. Puzzles are virtually non-existent. Destroying the evil book of magic, when you finally reach it, is extremely simple to do. Aside from the guards, no one will try to stop you, so there is not even a grand, climactic finish to the game.

The manual is not expansive, but is certainly adequate for the game. It contains enough to get you started, including brief descriptions of the monsters that inhabit various areas and dungeons, as well as some background information on the quest.

Bottom line: Not equal to the original; best for the beginner, not the experienced.



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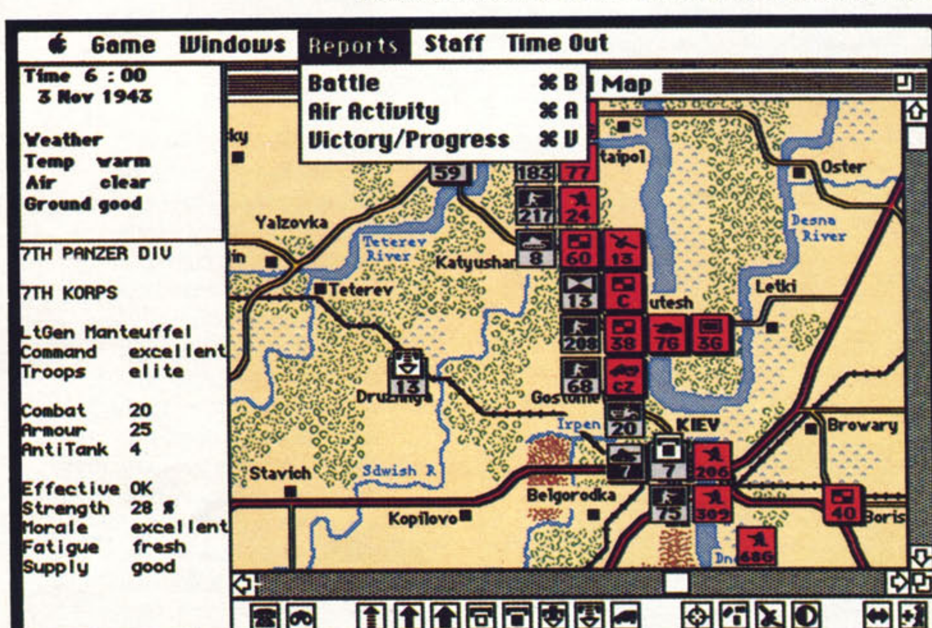
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Jedko Games, 134 Cochranes Road, Moorabbin VIC 3189 Tel. (03) 555 1022

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TAKING A PEEK

(Continued from page 49)

EGA or VGA mode) are as seductive as those in the 68000 versions and the formation flying option, opportunity for modem link-up, and use of pull-down menus make this version a real jewel. IBM ($39.99). Circle Reader Service Card #16.

Mindscape
3444 Dundee Road
Northbrook, IL 60062

ROAD RUNNER: Life may not be like a "Road Runner" cartoon, but this arcade game certainly is. Not only does the player get to flee Wile E. Coyote on foot, but some of those wild inventions from Acme come into play throughout the game. A hierarchy of bonus points (for everything from completing a level without missing any birdseed to "destroying" Wile E.) adds to the challenge of this game. (Not pictured). C-64/128 ($34.95). Circle Reader Service Card #17.

WILLOW: True to the movie and, in the EGA version, offering lovely graphics, this action/adventure game uses seven action sequences from the film to retell the story. The first sequence begins with the player trying to smuggle the baby out of the castle. Then, the viewpoint changes for the next sequence and those of future sequences. IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #18.

PBI SOFTWARE, INC.
1163 Triton Dr.
Foster City, CA 94404

ALIEN MIND: Upon arriving at the Zekford Biological Research Space Station, characters discover that all human life has been eradicated. Instead, the heroes of this action/adventure must face over 100 unique creatures in the course of exploring the five levels of the space station and confronting the "Alien Mind." Apple IIGS ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #20.

MONTE CARLO: This gambling casino simulation for the IIGS offers: Baccarat, Blackjack, Craps, Poker, Roulette, Slot Machines, and Trente-et-Quarante. Play is completely mouse-driven and the documentation clearly defines all of the options available.(Not pictured). Apple IIGS ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #20.

SEA STRIKE: This arcade game provides plenty of action, great sound, and finely-etched graphics. It is hardly a realistic depiction of the capabilities of a modern naval helicopter, but it is engaging (and addictive) on the order of "Space Invaders." In fact, the feel of the play is similar to that arcade classic. Apple IIGS ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #21.

Scorpion
19 Harbor Drive
Lake Hopatcong, NJ 07849

BLACK SHADOW: The beautiful graphics and two player competition (using either mouse or joysticks) carry this arcade product. The action screens look like detailed versions of "Zaxxon," but they are wrapped by character screens and other atmosphere sequences which offer something of a cinematic quality to the opening of each "mission." Amiga ($34.95). Circle Reader Service Card #22.

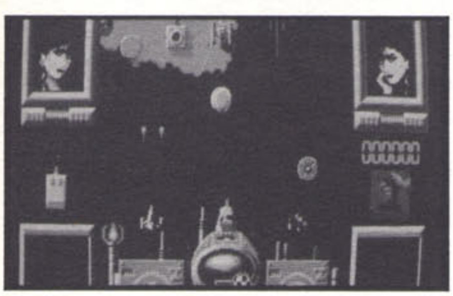
FOUNDATION'S WASTE: This is another arcade spaceship shoot-'em-up with that three-dimensional feel. The game offers four long levels of arcade combat, an upbeat soundtrack, and an animated finale. Atari ST ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #23.

Simon & Schuster Software
1 Gulf and Western Plaza
New York, NY 10023

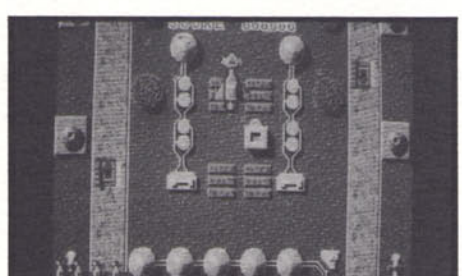
NOT A PENNY MORE, NOT A PENNY LESS: This parser-driven graphic adventure is based on the novel by Jeffrey Archer. The protagonist is an American professor engaged in post-doctoral work at Oxford University. Having been bilked by a wealthy con-man, the object of the game is to accomplish a countersting and get your $1,000,000 back. The Atari ST version uses a speech synthesizer for the various characters in the novel/game, but the C-64 version lacks this feature. Atari ST ($39.95), C-64/128 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service Card #24.

Strategic Studies Group
P.O. Box 261
Drummoyne, 2047, AUSTRALIA

ROMMEL: BATTLES FOR NORTH AFRICA: The "Battlefront" system, as refined and enhanced through the prolific sequels, has finally come to the North African campaign. The command point-of-view and limited intelligence associated with the system should be ideal for this particular combat venue. The variety of equipment utilized during these battles can also serve as building blocks for other scenarios. Apple, C-64/128 ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #25.



Black Shadow



Foundation's Waste



Not a Penny More



Rommel: Battles for North Africa

3.1 - Test Pilot (fiction); Serpentine; Cosmic Balance; S.E.U.I.S.; Armor Assault; The Arcade Machine; The Atari Arena; The Learning Game; INDEX; and more!

3.4 - Suspended; M.U.L.E.; Battle for Normandy Strategy; Serpent's Star Hints; Cosmic Balance Contest Results; Knights of the Desert; Galactic Adventures; Computer Golf!; Bomb Alley; and more!

3.5 - Electronic Arts; Combat Leader; Archon; Lode Runner; TAC; Paris in Danger; Cosmic Balance II; Delta Squadron; Zork III Tips; and more!

3.6 - Ultima III; Operation Whirlwind; Reach for the Stars; Legacy of Lylgamyn; Broadsides; North Atlantic '86; Zork II Tips; and more!

4.2 - Chris Crawford on Computer Game Design; Goren's Computerized Bridge; Carrier Force; DIRECTORY OF GAME MANUFACTURERS; Robotwar Tournament Results; M.U.L.E. Designer Notes; Starcross Tips; Parthian Kings; and more!

4.3 - Seven Cities of Gold; View from a Playtester; Universe - Two Reviews; Mig Alley Ace; Questron; Tycoon and Baron; A Broadsides Replay; Chancellor of the Exchequer; Enchanter Tips; Children's Games - A Shopping Guide; Under Southern Skies; Chivalry; and more!

4.4 - Jupiter Mission; Fifth Eskadra; Excalibur review and Designer's Notes; War in Russia; President Elect and 1984; Lode Runner Contest; Fighter Command; Galactic Gladiator Scenarios; Flight Simulator II and Solo Flight; Crypt of Medea; Sorcerer Tips; and more!

4.5 - Staying Alive in Wizardry; Adventure Gaming Conference; CGW Baseball League; The Computer as Opponent; Sundog; CGW Computer Game Conference; Road to Moscow; Strategy Game Tips; Deadline Tips; Seven Cities of Gold Designer Notes; Rails West; and more!

4.6 - Carrier Force Replay; When Superpowers Collide; Mail Order Games; Panzer-jagd Review; More Galactic Gladiator Scenarios; Cutthroat Hints; Should You Turn Pro?; Dreadnoughts; F-15 Strike Eagle; and more!

5.1 - War in Russia Replay (Pt 1); Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy (two articles); A Software Agent Looks at the Industry; Breakthrough in the Ardennes Designer Notes; Gulf Strike; Cosmic Balance Contest Results; Clear for Action; and more!

5.3 - Sports Games Survey; The Battle of Chickamauga; Imperium Galactum; Games You'll Never See; Crusade in Europe Design Notes; Lucasfilm Enters Home Gaming; Baseball Games for Your Computer; Mindwheel Hints; Silicon Cerebrum; Reforger '88; Napoleon at Waterloo; and more!

#26 - Conflict in Viet Nam; Inside Ultima IV; The Halley Project; Silent Service Designer's Notes; The Kobayashi Alternative; Spellbreaker Tips; Koronis Rift; Eidolon; Story Tree; and more!

#27 - Under Fire Replay; Europe Ablaze and U.S.A.A.F.; Map Design for Computers; 7th Fleet; Game Manufacturer Survey; Battle of Antietam; Ballyhoo Tips; and more!

#29 - Battlegroup & Mech Brigade; Psi 5 Trading Co.; Battle of the Atlantic (SimCan); Universe II Playtester Notes; Island of Kesmai; Borrowed Time Tips; Golf Games; Countdown to Shutdown; Moebius; Norway 1985; Clash Of Wills; and more!

#30 - American Dream Review; Phantasie II; Industry Survey; Kobayashi Alternative Revisited; Orbiter and Flight Simulator for Mac; Silent Service for Atari; Championship Basketball; and more!

#31 - Wizard's Crown; Trinity Playing Tips; Operation Keystone; Habitat/Quantumlink; Baseball stat programs; Grand Slam; Race Car Simulator; Amiga graphics/music/video programs; APBA Baseball; Spin Out; World Karate; and more!

#32 - Interview with Alan Miller; Interview with Brian Moriarty; Lords of Conquest review and strategy notes; Alternate Reality; Battlefront; A Mind Forever Voyaging playing tips; Chessmaster 2000; Rommel-Battles For Tobruk; Bronze Dragon; and more!

#33 - Leather Goddesses of Phobos Hints; Computer GamingThe Year in Review; GettysburgThe Turning Point; Shard of Spring; Interview with Chris Crawford (Pt1); DragonFire II; and more!

#34 - MoonMist Hints; Robot Rascals; Defender of the Crown; Iwo Jima/Falklands; Amnesia; Adventure Game Conference; Warship; Interview with Chris Crawford (Pt2); Major Motion; 1985-1986 INDEX; and more!

#35 - COMPUTERS IN FLIGHT ISSUE - The State of the Industry; Gunship; Gemstone Healer Hints; 50 Mission Crush Stories; Space M+A+X; Star Trek: Prom. Prophecy; Starflight; Interview with Doug Crockford; Blue Powder, Grey Smoke; Patton vs Rommel; Strategic Conquest Plus; and more!

#36 - BASEBALL FEVER ISSUE - Baseball Game Survey; Epyx Company Report; War In The South Pacific; Hollywood Hijinx Hints; Might & Magic; Sailing Programs; History of Bruce Artwick's Flight Simulator; Interview with Earl Weaver; Play-By-Mail Games; Ogre, and more!

#37 - WORLD WAR II ISSUE - Survey of WWII Computer Wargames; The Future of Computer Wargaming (1988-1992); Killed Until Dead; Realms of Darkness; Stalingrad Campaign; WWII Tactical Wargames Compared; Full Count Baseball; Electronic Arts Company Report; Wrath of Denethenor; Portal; Warship Scenarios, and more!

#38 - FANTASY/ADVENTURE ISSUE - Bard's Tale II: S.D.I.; Bureaucracy Tips; Sub Battle Simulator; King's Quest III; Computer Role-Playing Games (An Editorial); Battlecruiser; Accolade's Comics; Activision Company Report; Sinbad & Throne of Falcon; Interview with Jon Freeman and Ann Westfall; Where in the USA is Carman Sandiego; and more!

#39 - GAME DESIGN ISSUE - Game Development at Broderbund; Phantasie III; Euclid vs. Patton (Field Algorithms); Dragon Side II Review; Industry Report from C.E.S.; PHM Pegasus; Goodbye "G" Rated Computer Games; Theatre Europe; B-24 Notes; Designer Play Tips on Defender of the Crown; Infocom Company Report; Uninvited reviewed; The Sentry; Zen & the Art of Game Design; and more!

#40 - WARGAMING ISSUE - SSG's Russia (The Great War...); Ultima V and Wizardry IV (Comparative Overview); SimCan's Rommel At Gazala; Lurking Horror Tips; E.O.S.; Guderian; Rebel Charge at Chickamauga; The Best Educational Games of 1987; The Origins of Company Names; Street Sports Baseball; California Games; The Eternal Dagger; Goodbye "G" Rated Computer Games (Part 2); and more!

#41 - SHOPPING GUIDE - Wizardry IV; Make Your Own Murder Party; Microprose Company Report; Hot Titles for Christmas; Stationfall Tips; Ancient Art of War At Sea; Joysticks and Mice; Borodino 1812; Shadowgate; Deep Space; Leisure Suit Larry; Nord and Bert; and more!

#42 - FOOTBALL ISSUE - Plundered Hearts Playing Tips; Computer Football Game Survey; 1987 CGW Game of Year Awards (at DragonCon); Project Stealth Fighter; Beyond Zork; Spy Adventure Series; Warship Strategy; Battles In Normandy; Firepower; and more!

#43 - WARGAMING THEN & NOW - Shiloh:Grant's Trial; Border Zone; Mech Brigade Tactics; UMS Preview; High Seas; Darkhorn; Empire; Inside Trader; Legacy of The Ancients; Goodbye "G" Ratings Pt.3; Blackjack Academy; Into The Eagle's Nest; Airborne Ranger; and more!

#44 - FLIGHT ISSUE - Survey of Helicopter Siumulations; Alternate Reality-The Dungeon; Apollo 18; Falcon; Arkanoid; Guild of Thieves; 2400 A.D.; Test Drive; Faery Tale Adventure; Jewels of Darkness; Chuck Yeager Flight Trainer Tidbits; and more!

#45 - SCIENCE FICTION - Space Quest Tips; Space Arcade Games; Computer Games in 1988; The Future of Computer Games (Isaac Asimov, Harry Harrison, Douglas Adams, Jerry Pournelle, and others); Halls of Montezuma; Wasteland Sneak Preview; Skyfox II; Breach; SSI Company Report; Terrorpods; and more!

#46 - SPORTS SURVEY - Spring Sports Survey; Dungeon Master; World Games; Police Quest; Fog of War Roundtable Part 1; Ferrari Formula One Preview; Sherlock; Skate or Die!; Strike Fleet; Demon Stalkers and Gauntlet; Sons of Liberty; Deathlord; Knight Orc; and more!

#47 - MIST, MAGIC & MYSTERY - Ultima V; Wasteland; CRP Editorial by Scorpia; Trust & Betrayal; Panzer Strike; The Future of CRP Games (by Dave Arneson); Game Design Insights from The Journal of Computer Game Design; Echelon; The Train; CRP game hints; Maniac Mansion; Soko-Ban; Tetris; Ports of Call; and more!

#48 - COMBAT! - The Hunt For Red October; Bard's Tale III; Wasteland Hints; Long Lance; Return To Atlantis; Project Stealth Fighter; Universal Military Simulator Modifications; Wooden Ships & Iron Men; Twilight's Ransom; Gaming on Compuserve and GEnie; Video Gaming World (New Department); Mech Brigade Scenario; and more!

#49 - GAME DESIGN - Tom Clancy on Red Storm Rising; Lord British Talks About The Ultima Series; Advanced Dungeons & Dragons; Jinxter Tips by Scorpia; Space Quest II; Infocomics; Computer Gaming Books; Rampage; Decisive Battles of the Civil War; Dark Castle Hints; Romance of the Three Kingdoms; Fire Brigade and more!



Reader Input Device #50

On this page, a number of games and articles are listed for evaluation. Some general interest questions are provided, as well. For each game you have played or article you have read, place a 1 (terrible) through 9 (outstanding) next to the appropriate number on the card provided opposite page 4.

Games:

1. Empire (Interstel)
2. Earl Weaver Baseball (EA)
3. Rebel Charge at Chickamauga (SSI)
4. Breach (Omnitrend)
5. Micro League Baseball (Micro League Sports)
6. Seven Cities of Gold (EA)
7. Star Fleet I (Interstel)
8. Strike Fleet (EA)
9. Balance of Power (Mindscape)
10. Colonial Conquest (SSI)
11. Bard's Tale III (EA)
12. Wasteland (EA)
13. Dungeon Master (FTL)
14. Ultima V (Origin)
15. Pirates (Microprose)
16. Falcon (Spectrum Holobyte)
17. Stealth Fighter (Microprose)
18. Faery Tale Adventure (microillusions)
19. Questron II (SSI)
20. The Train (Accolade)
21. The Three Stooges (Cinemaware)
22. Police Quest (Sierra)
23. Airborne Ranger (Microprose)
24. Wooden Ships & Iron Men (Avalon Hill)
25. U.M.S. (Rainbird)
26. Shiloh: Grant's Trial (SSI)
27. Return to Atlantis (EA)
28. World Class Leader Board (Access)
29. Seven Spirits of Ra (Sir Tech)
30. Shadowgate (Mindscape)
31. Tobruk (Datasoft)
32. Rommel: Battles for No. Africa (SSG)
33. Hunt for Red October (Datasoft)
34. Jet (SubLogic)
35. Strategic Conquest Plus (PBI)
36. Willow (Mindscape)
37. Sons of Liberty (SSI)
38. Romance of Three Kingdoms (Koei)
39. Super Sunday (Avalon Hill)
40. Sea Strike (PBI)

Articles:

41. Greatest Story
42. Questron II Review
43. Into The Hornet's Nest
44. Over The River
45. Stellar Crusade Review
46. CGW Essay Contest
47. Three Stooges Review
48. Seven Spirits Review
49. Tobruk Review
50. Scorpion's Mail
51. Star Saga I Review
52. Video Gaming World

Question:

53. The most neglected subject in computer games is: (use comment space)



The Computer Gaming World Hall of Fame welcomes "Gettysburg," "Gunship," "Might & Magic," and "Starflight" into the ranks of games which have proven themselves over the course of time to be top-rated games. After being rated a significant number of times by our readers, members of the CGW Hall of Fame are chosen by the staff of CGW. Once inducted into the Hall, the game will be retired from the current Game Ratings List. As a consumer, you can be assured that any game in the CGW Hall of Fame is an all-time favorite.

Game Ratings

In terms of Action/Adventure, "Bard's III" seemed fated to grab the top spot. Moving three titles to the Hall of Fame allowed for plenty of movement on that side as: "Ultima V" moved into fourth position with trumpets blaring "Hail, Britannia!;" "Questron II" eclipsed its predecessor by a tenth of a point; and "The Train" found itself on track for a top 10 finish. "The Three Stooges" could stumble into the top 10 during the next ratings period if they are not pulled over by the blaring sirens of the fast-moving "Police Quest."

In the "Strategy Top 50," the declaration of "Gettysburg: The Turning Point" as a national landmark (induction into the CGW Hall of Fame) opened up room for "Balance of Power" and "Colonial Conquest" to accuse each other of imperialism by means of their triumphant entries into the top 10.

Strategy Top 50

Name	Mfg	Machine	Tms Rtd	Avg Rsp	Rating
Empire	Intstel	Many	6	36	7.80
Earl Weaver Bsball	EA	Am,I	7	39	7.45
Rebel Charge	SSI	Many	7	27	7.11
Breach	Omtrnd	Am,ST,I	4	43	7.09
Micro Lg Baseball	MicLg	Many	3	34	7.09
Seven Cities Gold	EA	Many	9	118	7.08
Star Fleet I	Intstel	Many	5	38	7.08
Strike Fleet	EA	A,C	3	39	7.08
Balance of Power	Mndscp	M,I	4	28	7.07
Colonial Conquest	SSI	C,At	3	60	7.07
Crusade in Europe	MicPr	Many	9	60	7.06
Decision in Desert	MicPr	Many	9	36	7.06
Oper Mkt Garden	SSI	Many	4	58	7.06
Silent Service	MicPr	Many	6	108	7.06
Under Fire	AH	Ap	6	23	7.06
NFL Challenge	XOR	I,M	5	20	7.05
3-in-1 Football	Hafner	Many	2	20	7.05
Ancient Art of War	Brodr	I,M	9	37	7.04
Carrier Force	SSI	C,Ap,At	5	108	7.04
War in So. Pac.	SSI	Ap,C	5	23	7.04
Flight Sim II	SubLg	Many	6	84	7.03
Russia	SSG	Ap,C	10	32	7.03
Reach for Stars	SSG	C,Ap	6	47	7.02
Anc Art War Sea	Brdrbd	I	3	26	7.01
Battle of Antietam	SSI	Many	12	41	7.01
Europe Ablaze	SSG	C,Ap	9	32	7.01
Computer Baseball	SSI	All	7	36	6.99
Battlegroup	SSI	C,Ap	4	35	6.95
Defender Crown	MstDsg	Many	8	51	6.95
Lords of Conquest	EA	Many	3	42	6.93
Field of Fire	SSI	Ap,C,At	5	67	6.92
U.S.A.A.F.	SSI	C,Ap,At	2	26	6.92
U.M.S.	Rnbrd	ST,I	2	30	6.92
Halls Montezuma	SSG	C,Ap	4	26	6.91
Shiloh: Grant's	SSI	Ap,C,I	4	29	6.90
Battlefront	SSG	Ap,C	8	34	6.89
Roadwar 2000	SSI	Many	3	34	6.80
Computer Ambush	SSI	Many	6	49	6.78
Panzer Strike	SSI	Ap,C	4	28	6.78
Gato	SpHb	Many	3	79	6.77
Gulf Strike	AH	Many	4	33	6.75
Dec. Battles ACW	SSG	A,C	2	20	6.74
No. Atlantic '86	SSI	Ap,M	2	72	6.65
Conflict in Viet	SSI	Many	5	21	6.63
Battlecruiser	SSI	Ap,At,C	3	29	6.61
Knights of Desert	SSI	Many	5	63	6.61
Chickamauga	GDW	At,C	2	26	6.60
Warship	SSI	Ap,At,C	4	44	6.57
Fifth Eskadra	SimCan	Ap,C,ST	2	20	6.53
Carriers at War	SSG	C,Ap	7	66	6.48

Adventure/Action Top 50

Name	Mfg	Machine	Tms Rtd	Avg Rsp	Rating
Bard's Tale III	EA	A, C	1	29	8.21
Wasteland	EA	A	2	33	8.15
Dungeon Master	FTL	ST	3	38	7.95
Ultima V	Origin	Ap	1	44	7.89
Pirates	MicPr	C,Ap	8	46	7.69
Falcon	SpHolo	I,M	3	23	7.56
Stealth Fighter	MicPr	C	6	23	7.46
Faery Tale Adv.	Micrill	Many	4	35	7.36
Questron II	SSI	A,C	1	22	7.18
The Train	Acclde	C	1	20	7.17
Three Stooges	Cnmwre	Am,C	1	25	7.16
Police Quest	Sierra	I	1	48	7.14
Phantasie	SSI	Many	10	68	7.13
Bard's Tale II	EA	Ap,Am,C	12	55	7.13
Airborne Ranger	MicPr	C	4	27	7.10
Spellbreaker	Infcm	Many	5	24	7.09
Zork Series	Infcm	Many	7	122	7.09
Archon I	EA	Many	12	96	7.08
Legacy of Llygamyn	SirTc	Ap,I	9	52	7.08
Pinball Const. Set	EA	Many	4	47	7.08
Lode Runner	EA	Many	6	60	7.07
Phantasie II	SSI	Many	6	36	7.07
Questron	SSI	C,Ap,At	6	90	7.07
Sorcerer	Infcm	Many	5	58	7.07
Wizard's Crown	SSI	Many	11	58	7.06
Legacy Ancients	EA	Ap,C	4	46	7.05
World Class Ldr Bd	Access	C	3	23	7.04
Enchanter	Infcm	Many	4	45	7.02
Eternal Dagger	SSI	Ap,At,C	3	28	7.00
One on One	EA	Many	8	75	7.00
Ultima II	Orign	Ap	8	61	7.00
Leather Goddesses	Inf	Many	2	31	6.98
Ultima I	Orign	Ap,C	2	48	6.96
Auto Duel	Orign	Many	2	65	6.95
Deadline	Infcm	Ap,At,I	3	44	6.94
Police Quest	Sierra	I,GS	1	20	6.90
King's Quest II	Sierra	Many	3	20	6.88
Hitchhiker's Guide	Infcm	Many	4	108	6.86
Planetfall	Infcm	Many	3	51	6.86
Echelon	Access	C	2	20	6.82
Beyond Zork	Infcm	Many	2	30	6.80
Return of Werdna	SirTc	Ap	4	21	6.80
Summer Games	Epyx	Many	2	35	6.79
Wishbringer	Infcm	Many	3	36	6.79
Choplifter	Brdrbnd	Ap,C	6	70	6.78
Racing Dest Set	EA	C,At	3	49	6.78
Phantasie III	SSI	Many	2	26	6.76
Demon Stalkers	EA	C	2	20	6.76
Hardball	Accld	Many	8	43	6.73
Return to Atlantis	EA	Am	1	22	6.73



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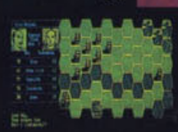
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Nobunaga's Ambition

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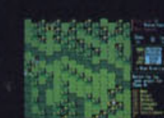


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Romance of The Three Kingdoms

Live Second Century China





The Japan most people don't know about. The Warring States period of the sixteenth century. Central government was weak and ineffective as feudal lords called daimyos gained power. Each daimyo ruled a single fief, each wanted to rule the nation. One man, Nobunaga Oda, came close but failed. He paid the price for failure, death.

Nobunaga's Ambition is a military, economic and diplomatic simulation for one to eight that puts you in Nobunaga's place, or in the place of one of his rivals. You start with one fief and try to take the entire nation. A game of both strategy and tactics, success takes careful planning and opportunism.

Administer your fiefs during peace to increase their strength. Keep your peasants and army loyal or risk revolt. Use your resources effectively, not spending too much on either guns or butter. Negotiate with other daimyos, or perhaps you'd rather just send ninja.

On the battlefield, control your troops in close tactical detail. Take advantage of terrain, attack, retreat, fight a war of attrition or go directly after the enemy general. Just be sure your side is smarter, tougher and better prepared.

Nobunaga's Ambition is fast moving and easy to play but historically accurate. Characters and game events come from the reality of sixteenth century Japan. Maps are almost entirely accurate, both geographically and politically. Advanced graphics and animation help give the game a feel of complete reality. One to eight may play either of two scenarios and five different levels of difficulty. Instruction manual and historical notes included.

China's second Han dynasty has collapsed. The entire nation battles with itself as warlords struggle for supremacy. You are a Master, one of these warlords determined to beat out the others and control the country.

Manage the states under your control to increase their power and resources. Cope with disasters, both natural and otherwise, when they occur. Choose good subordinates and win their loyalty. Negotiate with other Masters, or take a less diplomatic approach, controlling your armies and those of your generals in great tactical detail on the battlefield. Take advantage of terrain as best you can. Choose the right kind of attack for the situation, or just try and trick the enemy. Do what the immediate situation calls for but don't fail to think ahead.

A huge data base together with advanced graphics, animation and programming give the game an unprecedented degree of reality. Romance of The Three Kingdoms is based painstakingly on the Chinese epic novel of the same name, but is fast moving and easy to play. Features include:

*255 characters, each with a distinct personality
*Military, economic and diplomatic simulation
*Five different scenarios
*Ten levels of difficulty per scenario
*Play by one to eight
*Demonstration mode
*Complete instruction manual and historical notes.

Some comments from Japan's leading computer magazines:

"If you own a computer you've got to try this game".
OH! PC
January, 1987

"If the user can supply intelligence and imagination, Nobunaga's Ambition will provide more and better entertainment than any other game on the market".
Enter
August, 1986

"First released more than five years ago, Nobunaga's Ambition is still not just a best seller but one of the very best simulation games on the market".
Popcom magazine
January, 1987

"Nobunaga's Ambition is the absolute pinnacle of simulation gaming".
Mainichi Shimbun
May 7, 1987

"A great hit"
Asahi Shimbun
February 20, 1986

"Far and away the most authentic simulation game I've ever seen".
Hiroharu Seki, professor of Political Science at University of Tokyo in an interview with *Tokyo Newspaper*.

"Our highest accolade to Koei's Romance of The Three Kingdoms".
Popcom magazine
May, 1987

"Highest award for a simulation game".
"All around best game".
Login
July, 1987

"A simulation game without peer".
Enter
August, 1986

"Romance of the Three Kingdoms is simulation gaming at its absolute best".
Technopolis
July, 1986

"Romance of The Three Kingdoms is a simulation war game that will strengthen any businessman's ability to work through a problem, logically or intuitively".
P. C. magazine
October, 1986

"Romance of the Three Kingdoms may be pricey but the entertainment it provides makes it a good buy at any price".
OH! FM
March, 1987

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More than two years in the making, Warriors of Destiny sets the new standard for role-playing games. No other game can offer you as beautifully detailed a world or as exciting an adventure. Ultima V is the game for all role-playing gamers: Warriors of Destiny will enchant the novice and challenge the expert.
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• Hundreds of truly life-like people who can carry on complex conversations and interactions with you.
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